

DOJ drops charges against Louie Gonzalez in Delgado murder case
METRO / A19

Rival clans clash in North Cotabato; 9 killed, ex-gov, wife hurt
NEWS / A2

DepEd bans Chinese snacks in public schools
By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS stopped the sale of banned Chinese food products in the canteens of the 50,000-plus public and private elementary and secondary schools nationwide.

In Memorandum Order No. 314, the DepEd directed all school officials to "see to it that school canteens do not have such food products for sale."

The department cited a directive from the Department of Health-attached Bureau of Food and Drugs which warns the public

DEPED / A8

House cites Abalos 'scandal' to stop polls

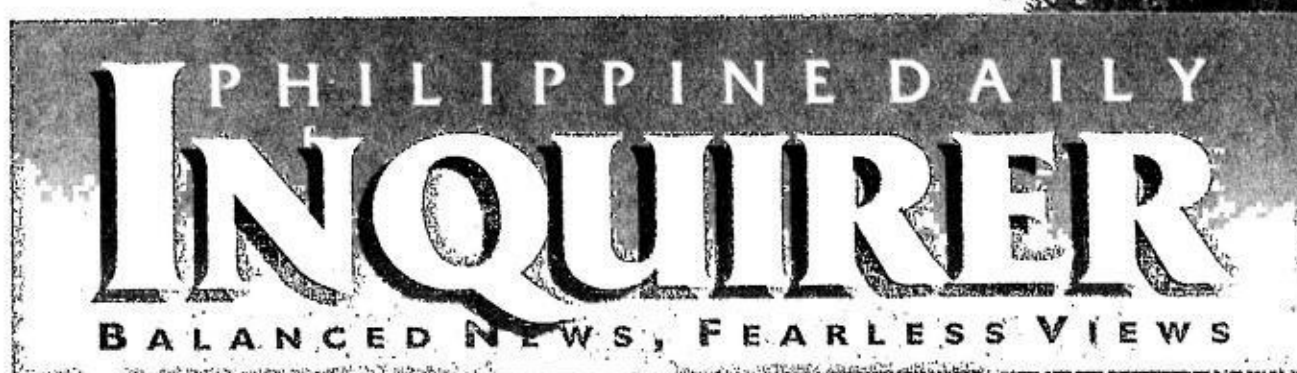


By Christian V. Esguerra and Alcuin Papa

ONE MAN'S SCANDAL can be another man's excuse.

The controversy hounding Commission on Elections Chair Ben-

HOUSE / A6



MOUNTAIN PASS: A stretch of the Halsema Highway, a well-travelled scenic route to Bontoc, Mountain Province, is badly in need of repairs after rainfall last week, albeit slight, showed up the substandard concrete used including on this road that had been hit by a landslide.

ELMER KRISTIAN DAUIGY/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Mike A confirms meet

His lawyer says FG didn't point finger at JDV III

By DJ Yap

JOSE MIGUEL ARROYO HAS CONFIRMED THAT he met with Jose "Joey" de Venecia III at a golf clubhouse, but said it was "a purely chance encounter" that did not include his ordering the businessman to "back off" from the National

Broadband Network (NBN) Jose de Venecia Jr.'s son.

Jesus Santos, lawyer and spokesperson of President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, said his client did meet with De Venecia in mid-March. But his version of the meeting differed greatly from that of Speaker

For one, according to Santos, Arroyo denied bullying De Venecia to pull out of the \$329-million NBN deal in favor of China's ZTE Corp., as the businessman-owner of Amsterdam Holdings Inc.

MIKE A / A11



WOMAN POWER: Two women closest to Mike Arroyo take up the cudgels for him. In a rare public outburst, only daughter Luli Arroyo hits back at her father's accuser. President Arroyo and Luli arrive for the opening of the Asia Policy Forum on infotech integration at the Crowne Plaza in Pasig City on Wednesday.

LYN RILLON

GMA orders Cabinet men to face probe

By Christine O. Avendaño, Michael Lim Ubac and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

IN A SURPRISE TURNAROUND, PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo ordered her Cabinet officials to attend today's Senate hearing on the National Broadband Network controversy and tell all they knew about the deal with China's ZTE Corp.

The directive came hours after Ms Arroyo, speaking at the Asia Policy Forum on Information and Communications Technology Integration yesterday, assailed critics for yet another attempt to destabilize her government.

"Yes, political circuses are entertaining but these should not dissipate our energies the way they consume those who stage them," she said at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Quezon City.

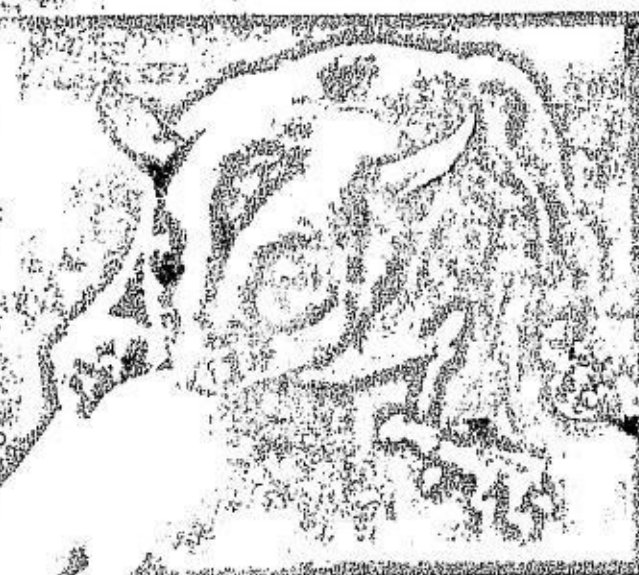
"Let's not be distracted or distressed by vaudeville acts that appeal to our worst fears, when we can be inspired by what our econo-

GMA ORDERS / A17

LOOKS LIKE A RAT

But it isn't. Fist-sized with rodent-like features, it is commonly called the Mindanao flying squirrel. It lives in lowland forests and survives in the main because of its size. It's too tiny to be taken as a meal by predators. So, size matters.

DENNIS JAY SANTOS
INQUIRER MINDANAO



Sino execs here, defend ZTE

By Riza T. Olchondra

OFFICIALS OF CHINA'S MINISTRY OF Commerce (MOC) visited Manila yesterday to inquire about the status of the National Broadband Network (NBN) project being undertaken by the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC).

The MOC officials—Li Sa, deputy director

of the Department of Asia Affairs; Weng Shengwen, commercial counselor of the Department of Foreign Economic Cooperation; and Wang Yungui, deputy director of the Department of Foreign Economic Cooperation—dropped by the office of Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza to ask about the NBN project.

SINO EXECS / A7

LAKAS VS KAMPI

House coalition cracks up, JDV could lose speakership

By Christian V. Esguerra and Norman Bordadora

A DAY AFTER JOSE "JOEY" DE Venecia III's damaging testimony against the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, cracks have begun showing in the administration coalition in the House of Representatives.

The brother of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, yesterday made it clear that his support for De Venecia's father—Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.—"ended" during the election for Speaker at the opening of the 14th Congress on July 23.

"Like any support, mine was only for that occasion," he told the INQUIRER.

Should the top position in the House be declared vacant as a result of the controversy over the \$329-million contract for the NBN project won by China's ZTE Corp., Iggy Arroyo said he could not commit to support De Venecia anew.

Already, the 40-member Garcia bloc in the House preferred that the Speaker take a leave of absence once the House begins its inquiry into the NBN deal, according to Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte.

HOUSE / A17

By Michael Lim Ubac, Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora

LED BY PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO's daughter, the administration yesterday mounted a counterattack against Jose "Joey" de Venecia III after the businessman implicated First Gentleman Jose Miguel Ar-

royo in a kickback scandal over a \$329-million broadband project with China.

Evangeline "Luli" Arroyo told reporters on the sidelines of a forum her mother keynoted that "because you (De Venecia III) fail in your business practices, don't blame it on innocent people here."

"I don't know if his old drug use affected

his thinking," she said.

Luli said she had talked to her father, who left for an undisclosed vacation abroad on the eve of the Senate inquiry where the young De Venecia on Tuesday named him as the "mystery man" in the broadband deal who attempted to browbeat him.

LULI LEADS / A17



LEAN ALEJANDRO: Once, there was a young man, a relentless activist in the struggle against the Marcos regime.

JOAN BONDOC

Young martial law fighter-thinker cited 20 years after his murder

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THIS YOUNG MAN DID NOT TURN A blind eye to the horrors inflicted on the country while it was in the grip of martial law.

Lean Alejandro—murdered at 27, ironically in the democratic space instituted by the Aquino administration—did not engage in the trivial pursuits that preoccupied much of the youth in his time. Instead, he chose to

fight the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

He took to the hustings to question the status quo and advocate change, linked arms with other protest leaders in the streets, and endured prison for several months for his boldness.

But this "thinker-activist" image of Alejandro has slowly become obscure 20 years after his killing.

"For me, the most important thing

YOUNG / A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western sections of Northern and Central Luzon, Southern Luzon and Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the western sections of Southern Luzon and Visayas. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laosag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legospi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Dalapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Second FRONT PAGE

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EZ2	FOUR DIGIT
23 15	5 2 1 9
(In exact order)	
Mid-Day	SUERTRES Evening
8 5 2	8 3 7
MEGALOTTO 6/45	
6 14 28 34 35 39	
P9,450,441.00	

Now, Erap demands pardon



VISITOR FROM TONGA

President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomes Prime Minister Feleti Vaka'uta Sevele of Tonga to Malacañang's Reception Hall after his arrival yesterday. The Tongan prime minister is in the Philippines on an official visit.

LYN RILLON

Convicted ex-president should set terms for his release—JV

A DAY AFTER SAYING HE WAS open to receiving pardon from Malacañang, convicted former President Joseph Estrada yesterday hedged on his position, even as one of his children argued that the opposition leader should be the one "setting the terms" for his release.

This time, the 70-year-old Estrada said he would only consider an "unconditional pardon" from his successor and arch-rival, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Deposed in a military-backed popular revolt in 2001, Estrada last week became the first president convicted of plunder in Philippine history. The Sandiganbayan antigrift court sentenced him to up to 40 years in prison but allowed him to remain detained at his Tanay, Rizal, vacation estate until further notice.

"I will accept an absolute or unconditional pardon without any conditions," the charismatic former movie star Estrada told Agence France Presse in a telephone interview.

them since Day One, when they assumed power and overthrew President Estrada," the mayor said. "Why will we trust them?"

But while both the administration and opposition camps have been floating the possibility of Estrada being pardoned, a civil society group remained firm against any "compromise."

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) said the government must implement the former president's prison sentence to send a clear warning to "future plunderers."

"Estrada and all future plunderers must suffer in jail. Let him suffer the penalty of a life sentence," VACC president Dante Jimenez told the INQUIRER.

Speaking for a group which counts itself as the first non-government organization to file a plunder complaint against Estrada at the Office of the Ombudsman in 2001, Jimenez said there is a "silent majority" that wants to see the law applied to all.

"The biggest damage to the country if a pardon is given is that future plunderers will never learn the lesson. There might come a time when someone will wreak havoc on our national treasury and get away with it," he said.

'I'll never admit'

"I will never admit I am guilty. I have been in detention for six years and went to the court. I could have left the country, but I did not," he said.

Estrada, speaking from his Tanay villa where he is under house arrest, stressed that he would flatly reject any pardon offer that included an admission of wrongdoing.

Estrada's son, San Juan City Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, supported his father's latest stance, saying it should be the ex-president—not the Arroyo administration—who should set the terms of his pardon.

If Ms Arroyo was sincere in her desire to reconcile with the political opposition, she should allow Estrada to lay down the terms of his release, Ejercito said in a press briefing at Club Filipino in San Juan.

Ejercito maintained, though, that he remained wary of any reconciliatory gesture from the Palace, saying he would rather see his father turn down any offer of pardon or amnesty since the elder Estrada was "innocent" of the charges.

"I never felt an ounce of sincerity from

'Erap must go to jail'

In a statement, the VACC also said Estrada must go to jail like tax collector Dominga Manalili, the first person convicted under the country's antiplunder law.

"Justice applies to everyone. It does not send a (person) like Manalili to rot in jail and allow a president to enjoy a pardon or amnesty for a similar heinous crime," the group stressed.

"So far, this is the best gift our justice system has given us, no matter how imperfect our system is. There should never be any compromise," Jimenez added in the interview.

"It was to our credit that the Sandiganbayan has risen above the pressures to give us a beautiful precedent. Should we allow their historic legacy be tainted by any form of political maneuvering with all the talk of amnesty, etc.? We call on the present administration to go full blast on this (pursuit of plunderers) with an iron hand and zero tolerance," he said.

The VACC also called on the public to reject any pardon or amnesty for Estrada and guard against partisan groups who would turn his guilty verdict into a political issue.

Alcin Papa, Kristine L. Alave and AFP

Rival clans clash in Cotabato; 10 die

KABACAN, NORTH COTABATO—RIVAL clans clashed in nearby Carmen town yesterday, leaving at least 10 persons dead, Army and police officials reported.

Col. Pedro Soria, commander of the Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade, said armed men attacked former Pagalungan Vice mayor Norodin Matalam on his way home in a two-vehicle convoy, sparking a gunbattle.

Matalam's driver and two military escorts were killed during the fire fight. Another aide later perished in the hospital here.

Soria said the attackers sustained six dead, including a village chief in Carmen.

Matalam and his wife, who were on the lead vehicle, were critically injured and were being treated in an undisclosed hospital, Soria said.

Insp. Miraluna Matalam, Kabacan police chief, said Matalam, who is also a former Maguindanao governor, and his men came from Carmen and were approaching the Lumayong Bridge when the incident took place.

She said a group of armed men led by Guiama Tayatog, village chair of Limbalod in Pagalungan, was on its way to Carmen when it encountered Matalam's convoy and opened fire.

"Matalam's escorts on board another vehicle fired at the attackers, killing all of them, including Tayatog," she said.

Soria said politics could be one reason behind the attempt on Matalam's life.

During the May 14 elections, in which Matalam ran for mayor in Pagalungan, his men had on several occasions clashed with the followers of his rival, Uttoh Montawal.

The clashes dislocated residents of several Pagalungan villages.

Montawal was eventually proclaimed mayor but Matalam contested it.

He said Montawal's proclamation based on 19 out of the 38 election returns was irregular. Matalam's election protest remained unresolved.

Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Doc on Gonzalez: No complications

FIVE DAYS AFTER HIS KIDNEY TRANSPLANT, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez is well on his way to an "uncomplicated recovery," the National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTi) said in a medical bulletin yesterday.

NKTI Executive Director Dr. Enrique Ona said that while Gonzalez was unable to sleep well Tuesday night, there was "no evidence of any rejection or any serious complication. We expect him to continue with his uncomplicated recovery."

The kidney donor, Gonzalez's long-time driver Felicitio "Muroy" Gunay, is also "doing well," the medical bulletin said. He has been discharged from the NKTi.

But Gunay said that he would stay in the hospital to help watch over the justice secretary.

Gonzalez underwent a kidney transplant last week. Acting as justice secretary is Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera.

Jeanette Andrade

WHAT'S INSIDE

CUSTOMS
seizes shipments of fake Airsoft gun replicas
/A9

CRIME RATE
down, contrary to SWS survey, says PNP
/A5

VILLAR, ROXAS
clash on punctuality in Senate session
/A5

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Aiko Finally Reveals The Secret To Her Weight-Loss

She was one of Philippine cinema's favorite young sweethearts who eventually evolved into a more accomplished, mature actress – and then some. Actress. Mother. Public Official. Aiko Melendez has assumed many roles not only in front of the cameras, but also under the watchful eyes (and sometimes inevitable scrutiny) of the public. One of the visible "changes" in Aiko was her transformation from being naturally slim to being overweight. From a 28-inch waistline, she went up to a 37, something she didn't think would happen.

"I've been slim almost half of my life," Aiko shares. "I was athletic, I used to swim. I never thought I'd end up gaining weight." How did she end up gaining all the excess weight? "I think it started with my pregnancy," Aiko recalls. "Kasi during my first pregnancy, I had this notion that I could eat anything I wanted because I was eating 'for two.' So I spoiled myself. And I ended up gaining a drastic amount of weight! Imagine, I even went up to a 37-inch waistline!"

Used to being slim, Aiko was unprepared for the emotional toll her weight gain would take on her. "I felt really bad," she remembers. "When I went to the mall, people would just come up to me and say, 'Aiko, anong nangyari? Bakit ang taba mo na ngayon?' and 'Ang ganda ng mukha mo kaya lang ang taba mo,' which was pretty harsh. I really lost my self-confidence. I felt like a *losyang*. I couldn't even dress well. When you're fat, limited ang clothes mo."

She was desperate to lose the weight – fast. However, this meant resorting to rash decisions in finding weight-loss solutions. "I tried every diet there is!" Aiko recalls. "South Beach, After 6, Atkins – you name it, I've tried it! But when I lost a bit of weight, I had a tendency to be lax. So I'd end up eating and gaining weight again. I also tried diet pills, but I ended up getting hospitalized because of it. I felt *na parang nabubingi ako*, I was getting palpitations and I was becoming irritable. I also had problems with my blood circulation."

Eventually she thought she found a solution in liposuction. "I had liposuctions done in various parts of the body – my arms, my back, my legs, my tummy – basically everywhere. And yeah, you do lose the weight. But if you don't watch your diet or exercise and regain the weight again, it becomes double, even triple of what you lost before. What's more, I was told you can only have at least 3 lipo's in your lifetime. 'Cause it can affect your heart, your blood

and the anesthesia used can even affect your memory! Plus when I gained weight again, I noticed *lumilipat yung taba* in different parts of the body. I wasn't proportioned."

She became hopeful when she saw close friend Dawn Zulueta's transformation from gaining post-pregnancy weight to slimming down to a body even sexier than what she had prior to the weight gain! Dawn went from 146 to an amazing 126 lbs. thanks to religiously committing to Marie France treatments.

"Seeing how Marie France worked for Dawn inspired me," Aiko says. "Achieving my ideal weight has become very important. I was about 181 lbs. when I first came to Marie France. The treatments were working and I saw how I was slowly but surely losing the pounds. However, after a few months of treatment, I had to stop because of elections where I ran for Quezon City Councilor. The stress from that also made me lose a couple of pounds. Then after that, I went straight back to Marie France to continue my program. In two months, I lost 17 lbs.! As of now, I'm already 148 lbs.! I'm still a work in progress, though. I'm hoping to reach my ideal weight *na mga* 130 to 135 lbs."

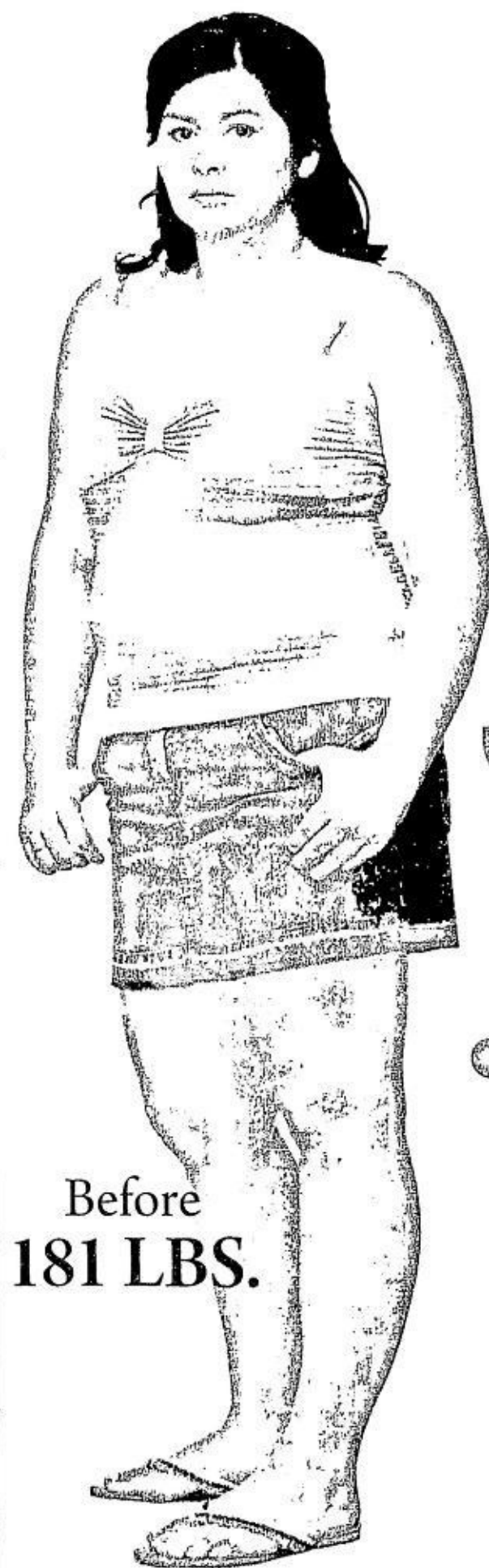
Aiko has nothing but raves for the Marie France treatments: "With Marie France *kasi*, it's safe. There are no medications, no crazy dieting, no surgery. It's purely machines working on your body. You just lie down and relax! My top 3 favorite treatments are Endermologie, Velasmoth and Physique."

Friends who have seen her transformation have encouraging reactions. "They tell me, 'Ang laki na ng pinayat mo! Anong ginagawa mo?' and I tell them I do Marie France treatments. I'm very pleased with the results. Plus I feel healthier too! So a huge thanks to Marie France for all the nice comments I've been getting. But I'm not done yet! Just you wait...I'm going to get even slimmer," Aiko promises confidently.

Like Aiko, you can also lose the excess weight the healthy, easy, non-surgical way. Call Marie France today at 894-BODY (2639); Cebu (032) 233-7637; Pampanga (045) 961-2981 for a free consultation.



So far...
148 LBS.



Before
181 LBS.

frontier



So far...
148 LBS.

Aiko:
I Went From a 37 to a 32-Inch Waistline!

"I never thought I'd end up being overweight. I used to be slimmer in my younger years. When I gained weight and went up to a 37-inch waistline, my life changed. I started losing acting projects. People would come up to me and tell me outright that I was fat. It really made me lose my confidence! I had liposuction done but when I gained excess weight again, it was triple of what I lost before. As for diets -- you name it, I've tried it! I just kept losing and gaining again. Then Dawn (Zulueta), who's a close friend, recommended Marie France. I was encouraged by her weight-loss success story. I started going regularly and so far I've already slimmed down to a 32-inch waistline! I'm still a work in progress but so far I feel better because I know I look slimmer and healthier!"

- Aiko Melendez
Actress and Public Official

Call 894-BODY (2639)



Programme Philippines 2007



Warmest congratulations to Ocean N Environment Australia, the Department of Tourism and the Philippine Commission on Sports Scuba Diving for organizing the "Celebrate the Sea Marine Imagery Festival Philippines 2007."

This festival is the biggest annual international event of the sea ever staged in the Asia Pacific region. Since 2002, the festival, held in Singapore and Malaysia has attracted entries from 38 countries.

"Celebrate the Sea" is held in association with the World Festival of Underwater Pictures, Antibes, also known as the "Cannes of Underwater Film Festivals." The organizers are bringing "Celebrate the Sea" to Manila in 2007 with the intention of making the city a permanent home for the Festival, thereby positioning Manila as the capital of underwater imagery in the Asia Pacific region.

I enjoin everyone to be part of "Celebrate the Sea Festival" and actively take part in preserving our natural environment.

More power to all of you and Mabuhay!

Gloria Araya
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
MANILA
21 September 2007

Philippine diving has everything to satisfy the fustiest diver – a variety of dive sites and facilities, extremely helpful English speaking Filipinos, unbelievable abundance of marine life and value for money products and services.

Our country is indeed a virtual paradise of infinite subaquatic and subterranean possibilities – from pristine reefs, huge pelagic fishes, World War II shipwrecks and undiscovered treasures, spectacular and vibrant soft and hard coral formations to exhilarating activities such as wall diving, underwater photography and deep diving, Anilao, Puerto Galera, Busuanga, Malapascua and Balicasag – these are just some of the favorite and popular dive sites desired by many.

More colorful vignettes and natural diversities await you in a country of rich legacy, exquisite fusion cuisine, varied languages and religions and the most important ingredient of a travel destination – friendly and hospitable people.

Essentially we have everything and more. Your expectations will be met and driven further than you can ever imagine. I welcome you all to the 6th celebrate the Sea Marine Festival 2007 and behold and experience a beautiful symmetry of 7,107 islands in the Asia-Pacific region that are absolutely beyond the usual.

Mabuhay!

Joseph H. Durano
JOSEPH H. DURANO
Secretary

Welcome to our nation of islands...all 7,107 of them are surrounded by seas; the south China Sea to the west, the Celebes Sea to the South, the Philippines Sea to the East and the vast West Pacific Ocean to the North. In fact the wealth of our country is mostly beneath the waves. Believe me, I am a diver and I get to indulge in some of the richest reefs in the world.

The Philippines is in heartland of the Coral Triangle, which spans across eastern Indonesia, Papua New Guinea to Timor Leste. Supported by scientific numbers, this is the global centre of marine biodiversity; it is our top priority for marine conservation. This extraordinary expanse of seas cover an area of 5.7 million sq km, the equivalent to half of the entire United States. It is home to over 600 reef-building coral species that is 75% of all species known to science! Geographically, we are indeed aptly sited. With the choice so ordained and bestowed by nature, we are proud to host the Celebrate the Sea Festival. It now gives us the international platform to celebrate the beauty and the wealth of our seas. We know that by preserving its health and well being, we are preserving our very own.

We hope that the Celebrate the Sea Festival will make a new home in the Philippines, after all we are right in the centre of nature's richest realm of biodiversity. Welcome to the Philippines and our heartfelt congratulations to all participants; you are all winners. Do take time to see our reefs; I am sure you will be awesomely surprised.

Mabuhay!

Cynthia Carrion
CYNTHIA CARRION
Assistant Secretary for Sports & Wellness Tourism
Executive Director of Philippine Commission of Sports Scuba Diving (PCSSD)

8am FORUM – SAVING OUR SEAS WITH UNDERWATER IMAGERY
Does underwater imagery contribute to preservation to our coral reefs, endangered marine animals? How can underwater image makers contribute?
Jennifer Hayes, David Doubilet, Steve White, Joe Morera, Gunther Deichmann

FORUM – CELEBRATING OUR SEA OF DIVERSITY
Nature's Richest Realm
Mathieu Meur, Scott Tusson, Philippe Poppe, Guido Poppe, Lynn Funkhouser

FORUM – PRESERVING OUR SEA OF DIVERSITY
Nature's Richest Realm – the NGO, the local stake holders, the challenge.
Domingo G. Ochavillo PHD, Bryan Dias, Ferdie Marcelo, Guido Poppe

EMBRACING DIGITAL UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY (part 1);
advanced techniques and application; selecting pictures for competition.
Michael AW, Mathieu Meur, Scott Tusson

The Big Bold & Beautiful – a big animal presentation by Amos Nachoum

EMBRACING DIGITAL UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY (part 2);
advanced techniques and application; selecting pictures for competition.
Michael AW, Mathieu Meur, Scott Tusson

FORUM – DIVERS ARE SAID TO BETHE BEST AMBASSADOR FOR OUR SEA – how can divers help?
Domingo G. Ochavillo PHD, Bryan Dias, Ferdie Marcelo, Gunther Deichmann, Michael AW

David Doubilet – Across the Pacific: The vast blue belt of the Pacific Ocean is composed of wildly different undersea countries. We will travel across the Pacific seascape from the temperate Galapagos Islands to the teeming reefs of Indonesia. This is a show that is not a portrait of an ocean but a photographic journey across the richest, most diverse part of our Water Planet.

Emory Kristof – the is a special presentation by the discoverer of the Titanic and deep sea vents. Don't miss special treat.

8am Up Ice Down: Clown Struck Together: Gregarious Life: Galapagos
11am Shark Feeding – the Triat: the 4 Seasons
12noon Ocean Nights
2pm David & Goliath
3pm Equator – River of Sun
4pm Premiere – SharkWater (Rob Stewart)

10am Planet Earth Shallow Sea – BBC
Presentation of Celebrate the Sea 2007 – Merit of Winners (SILVER)
– Feature & Short documentary
11am Presentation of Celebrate the Sea 2007 – HONOR of Distinction
Winners (BRONZE) – Feature & Short documentary
12noon Premiere – SharkWater (Rob Stewart)
2pm Equator – River of Sun
3pm Presentation of Celebrate the Sea 2007 – Outstanding Achievement
Winner (GOLD) – Feature & Short documentary

DANIEL MERCIER President – World Underwater Pictures Festival: www.underwater-festival.com
DAVID DOUBILET www.DavidDoubilet.com: National Geographic Photographer in Residence. David has shot more than 60 stories for National Geographic magazine since 1972.

EMORY KRISTOF is a pioneer of innovative, high-tech underwater photography using robot cameras and remotely operated vehicles. Emory created the designs of the camera system which found the Titanic. He led photographic surveys of the 6th-century wreck San Diego in the Philippines in 1993.

AMOS NACHOUM www.biganimals.com: As a professional marine Amos Nachoum have led National Geographic expedition teams with Dr. Eugene Clark, Dr. Sylvia Earle and astronaut Buzz Aldrin

BRYAN DIAS is the Pacific Program Manager for the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), an NGO based in San Francisco dedicated to protecting the health of coral reefs by integrating ecosystem management, sustainable tourism, and community partnerships.

MATHEU MEUR Singapore: www.mathieumeur.com: Mathieu co-authored "An Essential Guide to Digital Underwater Photography" and as well as the Advanced edition with Michael AW
MICHAEL AW Director, Ocean N Environment, Ocean Geographic www.michaelaw.com: Michael is the founding director of Ocean N Environment, a charity organization whose mission is to promote preservation of coral reefs and endangered marine animals.

JEN HAYES is an aquatic ecologist who has collected a couple of graduate degrees in zoology, marine and fisheries biology.

LYNN FUNKHOUSER was inducted into the inaugural Women Divers Hall of Fame. She is an internationally published photographer, author, lecturer and environmentalist. www.lynnfunkhouser.com

SCOTT TUSSON is the author of "Anilao" – the book won the grand prize at the 27th World Festival of Underwater Images

GUNTHER DEICHMANN www.deichmann-photo.com: Gunther Deichmann is an internationally multi-awarded Australian photographer. He is the author of The Dive Sites of Puerto Galera, and in 2001, he published his book on Palau, Micronesia.

FERDIE MARCELO is the Seacology Field Representative for the Philippines. Prior to joining Seacology, Ferdie worked for six years for the Philippine Senate where he often backstopped for the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, as well as the Committee on Education.

DOMINGO G. OCHAVILLO PHD is a Coral Reef Ecologist/Fisheries Scientist and he is currently the Chief Scientist (Philippines and Indonesia) for the management of the aquarium trade.

JOE MOREIRA is the Managing Editor of Ocean Geographic and the Chairman for the event forum.

Winner
Scott Portelli – Australia

Finalists

Danny Van Belle, Belgium
Giesela Kaufmann, Australia
Jacques Tarnero, Philippines
Elena Konstantinou, USA
Steve Clark, USA
Ralf Kieflner, Germany
Johannes Leichtle, Germany
Denis Degrango, France

Danny Van Belle, Belgium
Charlie Oldfield, UK
Sergiani Leonardo, Italy
Anita & Guy Chaumette, Fiji
Claus Topp, Malaysia
Ed Snijders, Netherlands
Nick Martorano, Philippines
Leo Blanco, Spain
Moeava de Rosemont, French Polanesia

Marchione Giacomo, Italy
Paibani Denis, Italy
Franco Banfi, Switzerland
Claus Topp, Malaysia
Irene Topp, Malaysia
Giordano Cipriani, Italy
Clemente Aquardo, Italy
Charles Hood, UK
Joz Tryner, Ukraine
Marcel Eckhardt, Singapore
Aaron Wong, Singapore
Aaron Wong, Singapore
Linda Johnston, Indonesia
Marchione Giacomo, Italy
Paolo Rossi, Italy
Antidio Rossi, Italy
Joz Tryner, Ukraine
Mikael Jigmo, Sweden
Jorgen Rassmussen, Australia
Windiarjo Tjandra, Indonesia

(refer to on site gallery)



Villar, Roxas clash on punctuality

By Gil C. Cabacungan

AFTER HE WAS BADGERED BY SEN. MAR Roxas on Tuesday to set a definite time for the opening of Senate sessions, Senate President Manuel Villar agreed and declared that henceforth he would bang the gavel at exactly 3 p.m. to signal the start of the sessions.

Yesterday, Villar did just that and banged the gavel in the session hall at exactly 3 p.m. but there was no Roxas around. Only three senators were present.

A few minutes later, several senators were seen rushing to their seats with a sheepish grin, including Roxas who was seen making a dash for his seat.

Due to requests from his peers, Villar banged the gavel a second time to give a chance to the "latecomers" to be on time in the record books.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who was among the early birds, commented wryly "So Mr. President, should we be considered present twice?" which elicited a loud guffaw from the senators.

Last Tuesday, Roxas complained about the shifting opening time of the regular Senate sessions which were supposed to start at 3 p.m. but have begun variably between 3 and 4 p.m. since Villar assumed the top Senate post.

"May we request that we set a time and we bang the gavel at that time. And those who are here are noted and those that who are not here are either late or absent because we could be spending a good portion of the afternoon just waiting. It doesn't matter what it is," Roxas said.

Villar, who was surprised by Roxas' inquiry, moved to suspend the session.

When the session resumed, Villar declared that henceforth, he would bang the gavel at exactly 3 p.m.

PNP: Crime rate on the decline

CONTRARY TO THE RESULTS OF A recent survey, the crime rate has actually been on a steady downward trend for the past several years, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said yesterday.

The PNP was reacting to the recent Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey that revealed that one out of 10 Filipinos fell victim to common crimes between January to June 2007.

Citing statistics from the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM), PNP spokesperson Chief Sup't. Samuel Pagdilao said the crime volume for the first semester of 2007 was recorded at 39,261 cases, or a seven percent drop from the same period last year and a 16 percent drop compared to 2005.

Crime volume from January to July of 2006 was at 42,141 incidents and 45,964 incidents for the same period in 2005.

Pagdilao, however, stressed that their statistics are based only on crimes reported to the police.

For so-called "index crimes" or crimes involving murder, homicide, physical injuries, theft, robbery and rape, the figures were also down, the PNP said. *Alcun Papa*

Angelita Rocas; 84

ANGELITA BAUTISTA-ROCES, WIFE OF former Manila Congressman Joaquin R. Rocas, died yesterday after a stroke. She was 84.

She is survived by her husband and their two children, Teresita and Danilo.

Her remains will lie from 6 p.m. today at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati, where these also will be interred Saturday morning.

A Mass will be said for her at 8 o'clock tonight, at 7 tomorrow night, and at 10 Saturday morning, preceding the interment.

Forum sounds call for Asia democracy

A CALL FOR GOVERNMENTS TO promote democracy amid threats of a resurgence of military and authoritarian regimes in Asia was sounded by participants of the 2nd World Forum for Democratization in Asia (WFDA), which opened yesterday at the Philippine Plaza Sofitel hotel in Manila.

Organizers said the participants of the 3-day forum would commemorate the International Day of Peace tomorrow, which also marks the 35th anniversary of the imposition of martial law in the Philippines by the then strongman-Ferdinand Marcos.

In his keynote address, Secretary Jesus Dureza, President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on the peace process, lauded the involvement of civil society in promoting democracy in the country.

"The government can only do so

much to strengthen democracy. We sorted all things and restored democracy not so much through government intervention as through the power of the people themselves," Dureza said.

He said Ms Arroyo had set in place a comprehensive peace process in the belief that the fountainhead of democracy was peace, and vice versa.

Sam Rainsy, leader of the opposition party in Cambodia that bears his name, said he had joined the forum to show solidarity with freedom fighters in Asian countries, especially those in Laos and Vietnam.

He said democrats in government and opposition parties should take the lead in the campaign to preserve newfound democracies in the region.

According to Rainsy, the three main criteria for true democracy are a vibrant opposition that constantly

challenges the government, independent courts, and elections that are transparent and reflect the people's will.

Act of aggression

Irene Fernandez, director and co-founder of the nongovernment organization Tenaganita, which promotes the rights of migrant workers and other oppressed and poor people in Malaysia, said the US-led war on terror was "an international network with no base and no nation."

Fernandez said she considered as an act of aggression the constant statement of US President George W. Bush that the security of the American people was the primary concern.

"Today, those labeled terrorists are those who protect the welfare of the minority. This is a contradiction to democracy," she said.

Human rights lawyer Alex Padilla, chair of the forum organizer Initiatives for International Dialogue, said the forum participants had converged "to assert, broaden and consolidate democracy."

He said the representatives of 20 Asian countries would share their best and worst lessons in democracy, totalitarianism and transitions of administrations, and push for democracy, peace and justice.

Dr. Anwar Ibrahim, former deputy prime minister of Malaysia, is to deliver a speech on "Prospects and Problems for Asian Democracy" today at 2 p.m.

His speech will highlight the Malaysian experience in political and civil liberties and economic development and in the consolidation of party control over the economy, politics and culture.



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ANNOUNCEMENT

The JBC announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): (NCJR) MALABON CITY, Br. 74: AGCAOILI, Alfredo P. (REGION III) BALANGA, BATAAN Br. 1: BALDERAMA, Angelito I. (REGION X) MALAYBALAY, BUKIDNON, Br. 9: ARBILON, Demosthenes R.; BARBA, Adrian L.; CAÑEDA, Antonio G.; CAÑETE, Evelyn C.; ESTRADA, Benjamin P.; GUILING, Antonio M.; RAVANERA, Manuel R.; ROSOS, Anastacio Jr. C.; SABATE, Restituto Jr. B.; SILVOSA, Joselito M.; VILLA, Dante L. (REGION XI) MATI, DAVAO ORIENTAL, Br. 5: LOPEZ, Francisco Jr. H.; MACALAWI, Alex L.; TANJILI, Ridgway M. KABACAN, NORTH COTABATO, Br. 22: ALZATE, Laureano T.; GELACIO, Henry M.; RABANG, Francisco III P.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC): (REGION III) SAN FERNANDO CITY, PAMPANGA, Br. 2: AGUILA, Dennis E.; ANTERO, Janice Y.; ANTERO, Rogelio D.; ANTONIO, Heidi L.; BUENAVENTURA, Mary Jane D.; DE GUZMAN, Caliope Jr. L.; DOMINGO, Richard T.; GARCIA, Oliver S.; LEE, Evelyn P.; MANGENTE, Job M.; PACQUING, Felipe IV M.; PAMITTAN, Mary Jean C.; PERICO, Jerry C.; RAÑOLA, Juan Jr. G.; RONATAY, Maria S.; SERFINO, Francisca M.; SORIANO, Ma. Ofelia C.; TOLENTINO, Ma. Lourdes F. (REGION X) BUTUAN CITY, AGUSAN DEL NORTE, Br. 1: ALONTO, Avelina V.; CASTILLA, Dennis B.; CURAZA, Ruben B.; FUDALAN, Fernando Jr. R.; HUGO, Maricel D.; MANSEQUIAO, Arseriaco G.; RAFIL, Francis L.; SALACOP, Kimal M.; SERRANO, Danny C.; TRIMOR, Pastor Jr. J.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION XI) MONKAYO-MONTEVISTA, COMPOSTELA VALLEY: ENRIQUEZ, R. Alejandro L.; FUENTES, Retrina E.; MADRAZA, Leo T.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants **not later than 1 October 2007** to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr., Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512 Fax No. 552-9598); E-mail address: jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph).

All applicants for judicial positions must submit to the JBC ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1 (Revised Oct. 2006) and proof of Filipino Citizenship.

19 September 2007.

Ma. Luisa D. Villarama
MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court & JBC
Ex Officio Secretary

(PDI - Sept. 20, 2007)



House cites Abalos 'scandal' to stop polls

From page A1

Abalos Sr. has given congressmen yet another reason to justify their move to postpone next month's barangay and youth elections.

Davao Rep. Prospero Nograles yesterday urged senators to support the House bill resetting the elections to May 2009 if only to allow Abalos to concentrate on his "defense" in the \$329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

Abalos has been accused by businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, son of the House Speaker, of brokering the deal in favor of China's ZTE Corp. and receiving a huge payoff for his efforts. Abalos has denied the allegation.

"The chair of the Comelec is very busy defending himself in this ZTE issue and he's supposed to be in charge ... of all electoral processes," Nograles said in a media forum in Quezon City.

He said he had relayed his proposal to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who opposes postponement of the elections. Opposition to postponement solidified the other night when senators at a caucus decided that the Oct. 29 polls should push through, contrary to the lower House position.

After Abalos retires

Nograles prefers the barangay and youth elections to be held after Abalos' retirement in February 2008. By then, Nograles argued, the Comelec would have new faces who could "fully concentrate" on the elections.

"Because of the supervening circumstances, maybe (Pimentel) will consider it, that we should have an

election with a new chairman of the Comelec," Nograles said.

House Bill No. 2417 on postponement was passed on third reading Monday and transmitted to the Senate.

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., chair of the House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms, said his counterparts at the Senate—except for Pimentel—were generally in favor of resetting the elections.

Mafia rule

But he said he had been told of the senators' practice of consensus-building: "Either everybody agrees or nobody agrees."

"I didn't know they work together like the Mafia," he said in the same media forum.

The Department of Interior and Local Government said more than 9,000 barangay captains around the country would be ineligible to run in the elections after serving three consecutive terms.

In a report to Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, National Barangay Operations Office (NBOO) Director John Castañeda said 9,642 barangay captains out of the total 39,145 were now on their third and final consecutive term.

The figures do not include barangay captains in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Current clamor

"These third-termers are however allowed to run as kagawad or council members," Castañeda said. "Having been elected in 1994, they are already on their 13th year as chief executives of their respective barangays."

Puno himself said the terms of barangay officials had already been extended for two years and the present clamor was to elect a new set.

Puno also said it was time to hold barangay elections because barangay officials might already be exceeding their term limits as set by the law.

He said that if the elections were postponed to 2010, then barangay officials would have been in power for a total of nine years.

"Some of them will have exceeded the age limit for holders of public office as provided by law," Puno said.

Gordon fumes

He added that barangay officials who won a third term in 2001 would also be exceeding term limits.

Administration Sen. Richard Gordon fumed against his Senate colleagues' decision not to postpone the barangay and youth elections.

Gordon said that by giving the Comelec more time to prepare for the elections, the Senate was in effect allowing the poll body to again violate the election automation law.

Gordon is the principal author of Republic Act No. 9369 providing for automated elections passed last January.

The Comelec, under Abalos, refused to implement automation during the May 2007 senatorial and local elections, citing lack of time.

Need to automate

Gordon insisted the Comelec should have long prepared for the automation of the barangay elections.

"We have to force the Comelec to automate," Gordon said at the plenary session.

Villar insisted "there is no reason" to once more extend the terms of barangay captains and councilors as well as the youth leaders.

"Some of us wanted to postpone it but we deemed it necessary to finish this issue since the candidates for the barangay elections have been waiting," Villar said. "Thus, to put this matter to rest, we made a decision and this decision is to push through with the elections." With a report from Dona Pazzibugan

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 5 ISSUE, a Lifestyle article on Page D2—"Champions of cheer"—misstated the year when the University of Sto. Tomas Salinggawi Dance Troupe won the first UAAP cheerdance competition. The first UAAP cheerdance competition was held in 1994—not 1995.

IN THE SEPT. 19 ISSUE, an article on Page A12—"Senate warns Mike A: Snubbing inquiry means guilt"—misstated the name of President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband. The First Gentleman's name is Jose Miguel—not Juan Miguel—Arroyo. Juan Miguel Arroyo is the First Couple's eldest child.



YES! TO SK REFORM A SUMMARY OF THE POSITION PAPER OF THE SK NATIONAL FEDERATION

While it is true that the youth are given the opportunity to participate in local governance through the Sangguniang Kabataan, it is also true that there are some loopholes in the system that became barriers for the SK to maximize the opportunities given to them; and to live up to the expectations of the people with regard to their performance. To us, this is one of the main reasons why we, the SKs, are now challenged to face certain issues against us.

We believe that a perfect organization, institution or system does not exist, but certain changes can be done in order to make it work for the better. However, the proposed changes must not be based on perceptions or opinions alone, but should be based on scientific studies, empirical data and on consultations with various stakeholders.

WHY REFORM?

The members of the Sangguniang Kabataan, the National Youth Commission (NYC) and the youth in general continuously presented the bigger perspective of the SK and at the same time strongly asserted why it should be strengthened through a reform bill. Allow us to mention a few of the significant events that transpired in the past two (2) years:

- ✓ **Approval and adoption of the Philippine Medium-Term Youth Development Plan (MTYDP) 2005 – 2010** – a guiding framework for National Government Agencies (NGAs), Local Government Units (LGUs), and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in the formulation and implementation of youth-oriented programs and policies by virtue of Executive Order No. 438 signed by Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal - Arroyo last June 27, 2005

The MTYDP is a result of a study (National Youth Assessment – the YAPS study) that underwent a regional consultation cum validation workshops (that was held in 17 regions) then to a National Consultation Workshop finally to the National Youth Parliament before it was approved by the Social Development Committee, which eventually was also approved and adopted through Executive Order No. 438 signed by the President herself. It is therefore safe to say that before the MTYDP 2005-2010 was approved, it underwent through a rigid process in order to ensure that the Plan itself is not based on perceptions and opinions alone but rather on empirical data and sentiments of the youth in the entire country.

As a guiding framework for youth-oriented policies, one of the policy strategies stated in the MTYDP is "to strengthen the Sangguniang Kabataan's (SK) participation in national and local development, and institute reforms in the system to make it more responsive to the needs of the youth sector."

- ✓ **Presentation of the output of the study conducted by the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) sometime last May 2006 entitled "Study on the Impact of the Youth Participation in the Local Development Process: The Sangguniang Kabataan Experience"**. The study was conducted last August 2005-February 2006 under the auspices of the Advisory Board composed of the Department of the Interior and Local Government – National Barangay Operations Office (DILG-NBOO); Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC); National Youth Commission (NYC); National Anti-Poverty Commission – Youth and Student Sector (NAPC-YSS); and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- The study states that "the SK is able to have a considerable positive impact on the youth as well as the community" and that "the weaknesses in the SK be addressed by effecting changes in crucial aspects of the existing policies and in their implementation".
- ✓ **Adoption of the Proposed SK Reform Bill by the 6th National Youth Parliament in October, 2006.**

The National Youth Parliament (NYP) gathers youth leaders in the country to discuss the prevailing issues affecting them and to serve as a venue for the youth to craft policy recommendations in the pursuit of advancing youth concerns.

The most recent Youth Parliamentarians also voiced out their sentiments to reform the SK.

The issues raised against the SK have not been substantiated. Contrary to such allegations, a study conducted by UP CIDS says otherwise.

ISSUE	RESPONSE
• SKs are having worthless projects and that it is just a waste of money	• The study conducted by UP CIDS entitled "Study on the Impact of the Youth Participation in the Local Development Process: The Sangguniang Kabataan Experience" shows that "the SK is reasonably efficient in using its funds." • One of the angles that the SK critics have not taken consideration is the external factor affecting the SKs performance – the support from the local government officials, particularly barangay officials. The study found out that the "most effective SK members are those who receive support from the local government" including barangay officials. However, one of the findings of the study shows that "barangay officials in some areas are overly controlling when it comes to approving SK projects. This may be because barangay officials impose their ideas of what the youths need, or of what the SK is supposed to do." That is why the SK National Executive Board (NEB) presented the fiscal autonomy of the SK as one of the provisions of the SK Reform bill

• SKs are inefficient and ineffective	• Findings of the aforementioned study reveal that "the SK generates a positive impact on the youth and the community through its activities. They also observe that the SKs activities are relevant to the needs, interests and the situation of the youth in general."
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Aside from the provisions stated above, one of the most important provisions the SK NEB is requesting from our national legislators is to reinstate the age bracket of the members of the KK to 15-21 years old as what was originally provided for in R.A. 7160, and change the age requirement for SK officials to 18-21 years old. As stated in the UP CIDS study, previous research on the SK as well as considerable number of participants recommended that age bracket for the KK and or SK be widened. The proposal to increase the age bracket also finds basis on the MTYDP 2005-2010 and the Proposed SK Reform Bill adopted by the 6th National Youth Parliament. This is to avoid the old concerns of legal age in signing documents and administering funds. Furthermore, conflicts with academic obligations of high school students and SK officials at the same time would also be avoided.

Calls for SK Reform are based on studies, empirical data, nationwide consultations and validations, sentiments from the different youth leaders and youth organizations of the entire country, and an Executive Order that serves as a guiding framework in the formulation and implementation of youth-oriented programs and policies as opposed to the perceptions and opinions alone that served as a basis of those who are calling for SK abolition.

Different versions of SK Reform Bills are pending in Senate and in the House of Representatives. However, one bill is also filed before the House of Representatives seeking for the abolition of the SK and having a Youth Sector Representative instead. The members of the SK would like to pose this question – is the proposal of creating the youth sector representative going to address the issues and concerns that the SK is facing now? Or will it just replace the SK and later on face the same problems at hand?

The proposed youth sector representative will not genuinely represent the youth since it would be the whole barangay constituents that will elect him/her. Further, he/she will have no youth volunteers and organized youth constituents to back him/her up since the SK Kagawads and the KK are also abolished in the alternative system presented.

The SK is a necessary mechanism "to uphold the interest and welfare of the youth sector through a democratically established institution for governance" (Lazaro of the Student Council Alliance of the Philippines, 2002). The move to abolish the Sangguniang Kabataan is equivalent to the repression of the democratic rights and welfare of the youth.

CONCLUSION

With the aforementioned arguments, we would like to reiterate our stand, that what the SK needs right now are REFORMS! We have studied the system of the SK for the last five years; identified problems and issues and came up with appropriate reforms to address certain problems. If we will create another system to replace the SK, again, we will start from scratch and study the new system.

The Sangguniang Kabataan, just like the Congress, is a seat of democracy - democracy for the young people who, in spite of their numbers, are being placed in the marginalized sectors of the society because they were seldom heard. The youth officials who answered the call for public service are being pushed to the wall of accounting for all the shenanigans of the whole political system. Our detractors are suggesting only the abolition of the institution that directly governs the youth as the answer.

The youth are very much willing to contribute in nation building. We recognize that we are the primary agents of change. We take the challenge and will assume the responsibility.

Mabuhay ang Kabataang Pilipino!

Mabuhay ang Sangguniang Kabataan!

Sino execs ... ZTE officials may be held accountable, too, says law dean

From page A1

The Chinese officials were accompanied by Philippine-based Liang Wentao, the Chinese Embassy's economic and commerce counselor.

"The representatives of the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China came to my office to ask about the status of the NBN project, and to reiterate their support for the project," Mendoza said in a statement.

The NBN project involves the setting up of a state-of-the-art communications system to interconnect all government agencies, down to the poorest municipalities. Through better communication, the government hopes to improve its delivery of services to the people.

A Chinese firm, ZTE Corp., won the \$329-million contract for the NBN project.

ZTE denied allegations that the company had to bribe or offer commissions to Philippine government officials to bag the NBN project.

Fair and square

Howard Xue, ZTE global marketing director and chief information technology consultant, said the company won the NBN project "fair and square."

"ZTE has completed numerous bigger projects around the world," he said in a statement. "We have proposed the best price, financing and technical proposal, and we are confident of beating all our competitors, so there is absolutely no need to bribe anybody to get the project."

Xue said the allegations made by Jose de Venecia III, cofounder and majority owner of losing NBN proponent Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), against Philippine government officials were untrue.

"For so long, we keep trying to let the public know the facts about NBN and ZTE," he said. "We feel frustrated that even when we talked, the truth still cannot reach the public."

"All our voices were covered by more eye-attracting stories full of misleading information," Xue said.

Pressure

Mendoza's office denied that there was "pressure" on the DOTC to implement the deal but acknowledged that officials from China's MOC flew in just to ask when the project would be implemented.

Mendoza said he informed the Chinese officials of the temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by the Supreme Court on the project, pending the resolution of the two cases filed against it.

He also reiterated his readiness to tackle all the issues raised before the high court, citing President Macapagal-Arroyo's remark that the NBN issues were best resolved by the courts based on a dispassionate appreciation of the facts and evidence.

ZTE, the Chinese government-nominated contractor for the project, denied sending the officials to the DOTC.

A ZTE source said the Chinese government officials came of their own accord to give the official seal of approval to the project.

As provider of the concessional loan for the project, China has the option to nominate a contractor of the project.

In a statement to the Hong Kong and Shenzhen stock exchanges where its shares are traded, ZTE said it had always adhered to law and rules in the conduct of its business both in China and abroad.

At the same time, the company confirmed that the NBN contract was not yet a done deal, but is conditioned on the Philippine government obtaining a financing package from China's Export-Import Bank.

Sales contract

"The contract was a sales contract entered into during the ordinary course of business of the company," it told stock exchange regulators.

"The contract also provided that its coming into effect would be subject to the fulfillment of a number of precedent conditions, which included mainly the realization of relevant financing arrangements and the approval of relevant government authorities of the Philippines," ZTE said.

"As at the date of this announcement, the aforesaid precedent conditions have not been fully satisfied and the contract has not yet come into effect," it said.

ZTE said it was "highly concerned" about this matter and had been taking actions actively, including engaging lawyers to file a defense with the high court and "apply for the temporary restraining order to be withdrawn in accordance with due legal procedures."

ZTE said it was working closely with the DOTC to have the TRO lifted "as soon as practicable."

"The company has always conducted its business operations in a lawful and regulated manner in strict compliance with relevant laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China and other overseas locations of the company's business operations," it said.

The \$329-million deal has been criticized as being overpriced and having lacked transparency.

Xue said the sub judice rule was "stopping him from debunking in detail" the claims made by De Venecia in his affidavit and in his testimony in the Senate on Tuesday.

Xue said ZTE was waiting for an opportunity to defend the project in the proper forum, on the basis of facts and figures and evidence. *With a report from Daxim L. Lucas*

By Allison W. Lopez

OFFICIALS OF ZTE CORP., WHICH bagged the \$329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, may be held accountable if Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. is charged for the allegedly overpriced contract, a law dean said yesterday.

Dean Amado Valdez of the University of the East College of Law, a guest at the Meet the Press forum in Manila, said ZTE officials could be among the respondents because of an international agreement on the prevention of crime and corruption.

Abalos reportedly acted as broker in the controversial \$329-million project with the Chinese company, according to businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III.

De Venecia, founder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc. which lost

the NBN contract to ZTE, recounted to the Senate on Tuesday how Abalos allegedly demanded advance commissions from ZTE.

If the company had indeed yielded to the demand, Valdez said it meant that ZTE participated in the bribery.

Valdez said De Venecia's statement against Macapagal-Arroyo's husband was "credible."

Straightforward

In his testimony in the Senate, the son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. claimed that the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo had told him to "back off" from the deal.

The dean described the younger De Venecia as "very straightforward even if the statement is against his interests, so to speak, because in so doing he is incurring the ire of people

close to the De Venecias."

Assistant Ombudsman Jose de Jesus, also a guest at the forum, said that "husbands and

wives" of public officials could be prosecuted if they were found to be colluding with the incumbent politicians.

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PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE STREET: The lineup include Rolando Olalla (3rd from left), Sen. Lorenzo Tañada, Lean Alejandro and Etta Rosales (extreme right).

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LIDDY NACPIL, one of Gabriela's founders, married Lean during the heat of the "snap" election in 1986. In September of the following year, she became a widow.

Young martial law fighter-thinker cited ...

From page A1

about him that should be introduced to the new generation is that he was a very good symbol of the Filipino youth at that time," his widow, Liddy Nacpil, told the INQUIRER.

Nacpil was also an activist and one of the founders of the militant feminist group Gabriela when she and Alejandro got married at the height of protests during the "snap" election called by Marcos in 1986.

She is now the vice president of the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC).

They have a daughter, Rusan, who was only six months old when her father was shot dead on Sept. 19, 1987, by yet unidentified men on board a van in front of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) office in Quezon City.

Rising to the occasion

The murder of Alejandro was among the many still unresolved to this day.

"But it is also important for people, especially the youth today, to see that what he did was not something so singular, or so unique. He was an ordi-

nary person, too. The only difference was that he faced so many great challenges—and he rose to the occasion," Nacpil said.

Alejandro was among those who took to the streets to condemn the assassination of former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino on Aug. 21, 1983. He became one of the leading lights of the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All movement.

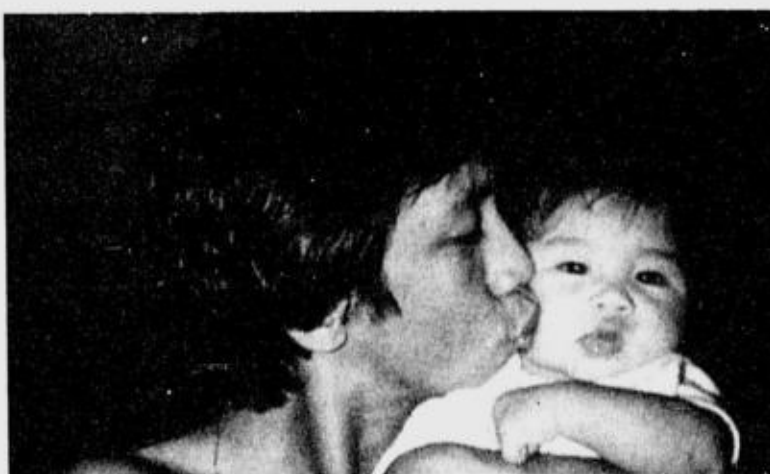
He also led the Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy, and the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy.

In 1985, at 25, Lean was elected the first secretary general of Bayan, then the largest nationalist and democratic front bucking the dictatorship and initiating popular campaigns.

In the May 1987 elections, he ran for congressman representing his hometown, Malabon, against Tessie Aquino-Oreta, a sister-in-law of then President Corazon Aquino, but lost.

Permanent mural

On the eve of Alejandro's 20th death anniversary, the FDC office in Quezon City was in a frenzied state preparing for the Tues-



DAUGHTER RUSAN was only 6 months old when he was gunned down Sept. 19, 20 years ago.

day night concert-exhibit—one in a series of events launched to keep his memory alive.

A six-day photo exhibit dubbed "Being Lean Alejandro" was mounted on Sept. 10 at the Palma Hall of the University of the Philippines. (It was at UP that he initially took a chemistry course when he entered college in 1978. He switched to Philippine studies on his second year.)

Another photo exhibit was put up yesterday at the LRT Legarda Station in Manila showing Alejandro as a student leader whose eyes were opened

to the social realities when he joined the short-lived Anti-Imperialist Youth Committee, and as a youth leader working with the late nationalist Sen. Jose Diokno, among others.

Tomorrow, when the nation commemorates the 35th anniversary of the declaration of martial law, a permanent mural of Alejandro and Macario Sakay—the last Filipino general who founded a Tagalog Republic in opposition to US colonial rule in 1902—will be unveiled at the San Juan City Hall and the Ospital in Makati.

The murals were a project of

the Renato Constantino Foundation together with the Tutok Artists Group.

In San Francisco in the United States, there is also the 20-year-old mural honoring Alejandro and other activist icons that was recently refurbished by a group of artists called the Haight-Ashbury Muralists.

'I was unprepared'

Nacpil recalled how she worried about Alejandro when anti-riot forces began shooting at an assembly of farmers who converged at the Mendiola (now Don Chino) Bridge on Jan. 22, 1987.

Now known as the "Mendiola massacre," the shooting claimed the lives of 15 farmers.

It was the only time that she braced herself to hear bad news about her husband, Nacpil said.

"He was always at the front-line of rallies, so I was ready to hear that he had been killed," she said. "When he was actually killed several months later, I was totally unprepared."

Alejandro was shot in the face inside his car, an Isuzu Gemini. He had just put down a book he was reading, by Italian socialist Antonio

Gramsci, Nacpil said.

Reading was among the things he loved doing outside his political life, she said, adding:

"He wasn't just somebody you would be in awe of, but also someone whom you can be friends with."

Rockabye baby

The man played chess, dined out with his friends in the protest movement, and sang their baby to sleep with Sting's "Every Breath You Take" even if he was tone-deaf, Nacpil said with a chuckle.

He liked going to the movies, she said, his favorites being "Star Wars" and "The Sound of Music," which he watched six times each.

He was fascinated with Tolkien, and loved the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

"He also dreamed of retiring one day, to live a quiet life, read all the books at the UP library, and teach our daughter how to play chess. Those were our far-away dreams," Nacpil said, her eyes brimming with tears.

"He would have really wanted to live to see these through," she said.

Manila Water

NOTICE TO MANILA WATER CUSTOMERS

Effective October 5, 2007, Manila Water will be implementing a minimal increase in water rates as a result of a P0.14 per cubic meter increase in the Foreign Currency Differential Adjustment (FCDA) in the 3rd quarter of 2007. This will translate to less than 1% increase in the monthly water bills of customers.

The minimal increase in FCDA was approved by the METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM (MWSS) thru Board Resolution No. 2007-194 dated 13 September 2007, confirming MWSS Regulatory Office Resolution No. 07-012-CA dated 13 September 2007.

FCDA is a tariff mechanism that was formulated to recover or account for future foreign exchange losses or gains arising from the payment of Manila Water of foreign exchange denominated concession fees to the MWSS as well as loans for its service expansion and improvement.

Manila Water Company continues to undertake service improvement and rehabilitation programs to further improve service levels in areas with 100% water coverage which include the southeastern part of Quezon City, Mandaluyong City, San Juan City, Marikina City, Pasig City, Pateros, Manila (San Andres and Sta. Ana only) and Makati City (east of South Super Highway). It also continues to embark on aggressive service expansion programs to reach the fringe areas of Taguig, Antipolo, San Mateo, Rodriguez, Cainta, Taytay and Angono, in Rizal Province. Manila Water has also started providing water supply to the towns of Baras, Binangonan and Jalajala, also in Rizal. Currently, projects have already commenced to supply water to the town of Teresa, also in Rizal.

Likewise, as part of the Company's mandate, Manila Water is expanding its wastewater operations and sanitation services all over the East Concession area to ensure the protection of the environment. Manila Water has recently begun operations of two newly-constructed septage treatment plants in Taguig and San Mateo.

To ensure water supply sustainability within the East Zone, Manila Water is now exploring potential new water sources, as well as implementing reliability programs to ensure service continuity in the event of calamities and other natural disasters.

DepEd bans Chinese snacks ...

From page A1

against the purchase of several China-manufactured products containing formaldehyde, a cancer-causing substance.

Formaldehyde is a colorless, flammable and strong-smelling gas that is classified as a human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, and a probable human carcinogen by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

According to the BFAD, the following imported Chinese products have given "positive results for the presence of formaldehyde" and are not fit for human consumption:

Candies, biscuits

- White Rabbit

Creamy Candy, manufactured by the Shanghai Guan Sheng Yuan Food General Factory in Shanghai and distributed here by the Cheng Ban Yek & Co. Inc.

- Milk Candy, made by the Romantic Fish Food Industry Co. Inc. in Fujian province (but has no licensed distributor in the Philippines).

- Bairon Grape Biscuits, manufactured by Dongguan Bairong Foodstuff Co. Ltd. in Dongguan City, Guangdong province and distributed here by the Goodway International Trading Corp.

- Yongkang Foods Grape Biscuit, made by the Dongguan Yongkang Food Co. Ltd. in Dongguan City, Guangdong province (but has no licensed distributor here).

Healthy lifestyles

BFAD Director Leticia Barbara Gutierrez earlier asked importers and local distributors of these products to withdraw them from the market "until such time that there is evidence that the safety of the subject goods is assured and they are fit for human consumption."

Director Thelma Santos of the DepEd's School Health and Nutrition Center, or SHNC, reminded school canteens to

"serve nutritious and affordable meals to students because these will give them a better chance to grow into healthy and productive adults."

The SHNC is conducting school conferences on nutrition "to increase the awareness of students on the subject and to clarify misconceptions about nutrition and healthy lifestyles."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, September 20, 2007
24th Week in Ordinary Time

Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang and Companions

1st Reading: 1 Tim 4:12-16
Gospel: Luke 7:36-50

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to share his meal, so he went to the Pharisee's home and as usual reclined on the sofa to eat. And it happened that a woman of this town, who was known as a sinner, heard that he was in the Pharisee's house. She brought a precious jar of perfume and stood behind him at his feet, weeping. She wet his feet with tears, she dried them with her hair and kissed his feet and poured the perfume on them.

The Pharisee who had invited Jesus was watching and thought, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what sort of person is touching him; isn't this woman a sinner?"

Then Jesus spoke to the Pharisee and said, "Simon, I have something to ask you." He answered, "Speak, master." And Jesus said, "Two people were in debt to the same creditor. One owed him five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty. As they were unable to pay him back, he graciously canceled the debts of both. Now, which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, who was forgiven more." And Jesus said, "You are right." And turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? You gave me no water for my feet when I entered your house, but she has washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You didn't welcome me with a kiss, but she has not stopped kissing my feet since she came in. You provided no oil for my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. This is why, I tell you, her sins, her many sins, are forgiven, because of her great love. But the one who is forgiven little, has little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven." The others sitting with him at the table began to wonder, "Now this man claims to forgive sins! But Jesus again spoke to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'"

Commentary
Timothy is young but mature in his faith. He must be devoted to reading the scriptures, to preaching and teaching, and he is to be absorbed in his service so that others can see and take heart from his example (as well as his words). This is how Timothy is saved as well as many of those around him. This is how we are saved—and this is what opens us to the awareness of others who are seeking faith and salvation.

Jesus is invited to a Pharisee's house for dinner. But he is treated shabbily and not as a guest. Yet a woman arrives who in public attends to Jesus, showering him with honor and personal service. The host is scandalized because he knows who the woman is (how?) yet Jesus knows what he is thinking—how he has judged her harshly. His story makes it clear—everyone is in debt to God and some owe a little and some owe a lot. But all are forgiven. And who loves God more?—the one whose debt was great. She is sent home with praise, respect, and thanks, and is made the model of how he must learn to love, in gratitude. Do we need to learn this too?

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Customs seizes shipments of Airsoft gun replicas

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE entry of gun replicas in the country, prompting Customs officials to double their efforts in intercepting these through newly installed X-ray machines.

"We have intercepted three containers full of Airsoft guns since June," Julito Doria, head of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) X-Ray Inspection Project, said in an interview.

Doria said original Japanese Airsoft guns, used in military simulation games, cost P12,000 each. However, those that were smuggled into the Philippines from China cost only P5,000.

"The counterfeit Airsoft guns enter the country [in huge quantities]," he said, adding that the importers declare the shipment as plastic toys to evade further scrutiny.

Doria, however, said his group was able to detect several packages of gun replicas on July 2 inside the shipment of a container van from China through the X-ray machines.

Less than two weeks later, the Customs personnel were able to intercept another

shipment consigned to Kat-Leen Trading. The cargo contained P224,624 worth of gun replicas.

"Because they are exact replicas of real guns and could be used in criminal activities, the Philippine National Police (PNP) has issued a circular regulating Airsoft products," Doria said.

He said that the installation of more X-ray machines in other major ports would greatly help in intercepting more of the gun replicas.

"In just two months of its full-blast operation, the X-ray project, which is under the direct supervision of the Commissioner of Customs, was able to [collect] various items and shipment worth millions that were recommended either for seizure or payment of additional duties and taxes," Doria said in his report to BOC Commissioner Napoleon Morales.

He said the deployment of more state-of-the-art X-ray machines in other major ports in the country would prevent the entry of contraband, guns, drugs and other anti-social goods.

"There would also be an increase in revenue collection as a result of proper declaration of importation," he said.

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Singapore study grants for Pinoys

THE SINGAPORE government has opened the door to Filipino students wishing to avail themselves of 120 full-time courses given in five government polytechnic schools that offer a three-year diploma program.

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Toward this end, CSC International Consulting, which has offices in Singapore, the Philippines and Canada will conduct a free one-day seminar on such topics as the Singapore government polytechnic grants, the Singapore employment pass certificate and the Canadian skilled worker employment visa.

The seminar will be held on Sept. 22 at Cityland Tower, Chino Roces Avenue (in front of Don Bosco), Makati City.

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Mike A confirms meet with JDV III

From page A1

(AHI) claimed on Tuesday at the initial hearing of the Senate's inquiry into the deal.

"Why would the First Gentleman berate the Speaker's son when the incident being referred to by Joey was the first meeting between him and Mr. Arroyo—a purely chance encounter?" Santos said yesterday at a press conference in Makati City.

Santos said Arroyo, who quietly flew to Hong Kong en route to Europe on Monday, had merely "reminded" De Venecia that his being the Speaker's son made it inappropriate for him to get involved in government contracts.

For another, Arroyo denied that Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos—the alleged broker of the deal with ZTE—was at the meeting at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City, Santos said.

Quoting his client, Santos said only Arroyo, De Venecia and Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza were present.

De Venecia said Arroyo's version of their meeting was "totally false."

'Whole cabal was there'

"There wasn't even an exchange of small talk. He just told me to 'back off,'" De Venecia said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Regarding Arroyo's claim that Abalos was absent at the meeting, De Venecia said the whole "cabal" was there.

"Chairman Abalos was there, Larry Mendoza was there, Jimmy dela Paz was there, Quirino dela Torre was there, Ruben Reyes was there," De Venecia added.

Dela Paz was Abalos' chief of staff, Dela Torre was the Philippine National Police comptroller when Mendoza was PNP chief while Reyes is a golfing buddy of Abalos and a former classmate of the President's brother, Diosdado Macapagal Jr.

Santos said he phoned his client

shortly after De Venecia's testimony at the Senate.

3-minute conversation

During the three-minute conversation, Santos said, he advised Arroyo to cut short his two-week vacation in Europe, and Arroyo responded that he would be back "soon" to answer De Venecia's accusations.

Santos said he did not ask about his client's whereabouts.

Asked if Arroyo intended to testify at the Senate if invited, Santos said: "Yes, he will. The First Gentleman has nothing to hide."

But Sergio Apostol, the President's chief legal adviser, told reporters in Malacañang that not even a subpoena from the Senate blue ribbon committee could compel Arroyo to testify.

Apostol said he would not advise Arroyo to attend a "stressful" Senate hearing following a life-threatening heart operation on April 9.

"Definitely not. I think the doctors will not advise him to appear because they do not want him to undergo any stress," Apostol said.

Even Sen. Panfilo Lacson said "it would be better if we just excuse him or ask his doctor's permission if he can withstand the rigors of a hearing."

The Tuesday hearing lasted more than five hours, with no lunch break. "I am particularly reluctant to call him to a hearing if he is not fit for it," Lacson, who had earlier accused Arroyo of keeping campaign money under the "Jose Pidal" accounts, told reporters.

At Wack Wack

This was Santos' account of the "chance encounter":

Arroyo was at the Wack Wack clubhouse after a round of golf when De Venecia arrived and sat beside Mendoza at a nearby table.

Arroyo overheard De Venecia following up with Mendoza the AHI proposal on the broadband project. At this point, Arroyo asked Mendoza about his companion, leading Mendoza to make introductions.

"De Venecia continued to follow up his project proposal with Mendoza,

prompting Mr. Arroyo to remind the young De Venecia that he cannot be involved in any government transaction because he is the son of the Speaker," Santos said.

"After this, Mr. Arroyo immediately joined other friends at another table," Santos said, contradicting De Venecia's statement that Arroyo had thrust a finger at his face and barked at him to back off from the deal.

In a statement distributed to reporters, Santos pointed out that De Venecia's Sept. 10 affidavit made no mention of Arroyo's supposed participation in the NBN deal.

"So why will Mr. Arroyo pressure or intimidate him, if the First Gentleman has nothing to do at all with the project?" the lawyer said, adding:

"It defies common sense and can only mean that maybe the young De Venecia has been coached to say that."

Used 'back off' 5 times

Santos said De Venecia's remark that Arroyo had told him to "back off" rang false.

He said it was obvious that De Venecia himself thought up the phrase, adding that "in the five years" that he had worked with Arroyo, "I've never heard him say something like that."

"I'm sure he never said that," he stressed.

To press his point, Santos showed reporters a copy of De Venecia's affidavit, in which the businessman used the phrases "back off" and "backing off" at least five times.

For example, in paragraph 32 of the nine-page affidavit, De Venecia said: "I could not back off on behalf of AHI, and besides, AHI's proposal was far superior to the original Abalos-ZTE proposal, and it would be more advantageous to the government..."

He said in paragraph 15: "Chairman Abalos would consistently request for meetings during the latter half of December 2006, so that he could convince me to either back off from the deal or be his partner."

Santos also indicated what could

be a crack in the relations between the First Family and the Speaker.

He said that in his opinion, it would "not be believable for any young person to do something without the permission of their parents."

"Among us Filipinos, it's very common [for us to] consult our parents first before doing something," he said.

Asked if he believed that De Venecia had his father's blessing to do what he did, Santos said: "I would not want to speculate."

For health reasons

On April 21, the President left her ailing husband's bedside for 12 hours and flew to China to witness the signing of the NBN agreement by Mendoza and ZTE vice president Yu Yong.

Apostol denied yesterday that Malacañang's decision not to allow Arroyo to attend the Senate inquiry had political undertones. He said it was only "for health reasons."

"In fact, that is what the doctors keep on emphasizing. He (Arroyo) is recuperating; he should not be doing things that will be stressful," Apostol said.

Told that the Senate blue ribbon committee could possibly cite Arroyo for contempt, Apostol said: "It will depend again on the senators. A health reason is always a valid reason in all investigative bodies. But I think he would not be cited for contempt. There is no basis for that."

Lacson himself said he would "even manifest, if necessary," that Arroyo not be summoned to the inquiry "because of his health."

"It's not for anything [else]," the senator said. "We are all Christians. No matter how important the information we need to extract from him, if there are health constraints, we should just wait."

Legal excuse

Lacson also said the hearings could go on even without Arroyo's testimony on what supposedly happened at the Wack Wack meeting with De Venecia.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said Arroyo should be legally excused from the hearings given his condition.

Arroyo's heart surgeon, Dr. Rommel Cariño, said on Tuesday that Arroyo had asked permission to go on a two-week trip to Europe. He said he had given the go-signal, but conceded to the INQUIRER that his patient's departure—on the eve of the Senate inquiry—was timed badly.

It was not the only case of bad timing for the President's husband.

On May 20, 2005, amid accusations that he had received kickbacks from "jueteng," he flew to Singapore. Santos, his lawyer, dismissed talk that his sudden departure was related to the controversy, and said Arroyo had just gone on vacation with his siblings Ignacio and Marilou.

Arroyo returned on May 29.

On June 30, a day after the President announced that her husband had volunteered to go abroad "to remove himself from any situation that [would] cast doubt on [her] presidency," Arroyo flew to Hong Kong.

He came back after three days but left again, this time for the United States on July 6.

Arroyo flew back on July 31 to attend the burial of his half-sister, then returned to the United States on Aug. 10.

He stayed there until late October. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Inquirer Research*

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Indecent haste

A NEW FRONT HAS OPENED IN THE POST-EDSA II wars—and almost everything, even the historic plunder trial of an ex-president, has receded in newsworthiness. The ZTE scandal, which involves the patently immoral brokering allegedly of the chairman of the Commission on Elections, the alleged bribery of public officials and corporate executives by the tens of millions of dollars and not least the sensational allegation about First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and his ungentlemanly intervention, has something which the old scandals gnawing at the public's conscience the last two years do not have: sheer page-turning novelty.

Before we forget about older controversies, however, let us revisit a central issue: Joseph Estrada's trial for plunder.

Exactly a week after the former president was convicted on two charges of plunder, history has degenerated into farce. Instead of taking a deep breath and then learning vital lessons from what may well be the most expensive trial in our country's history, our leaders are engaged in an obscene race to forget the trial itself.

The plunder trial, which found Estrada guilty of using his office or authority or influence to amass hundreds of millions of pesos in *jueteng* protection money and of forcing two government institutions to buy stocks in a friend's firm in order to earn P189.7 million in commissions for himself, taught us that every single one of our officials remains accountable to us, the public at large. It taught us that the earnest doggedness of hardworking prosecutors, the courageous consistency of critical witnesses and not least the underestimated but real independence of the courts can hold even the highest officials of the land to account. It taught us that what we learned at our mother's knee remains true to this corrupt day: Crime does not pay.

But what do we hear from our esteemed leaders? Presumptive (or is it presumptuous?) presidential candidate Sen. Mar Roxas filed a resolution in the Senate supporting pardon for the convicted plunderer, on the grounds that Estrada had shown "remarkable humility" and that a grant of pardon would "serve the imperatives of national unity and reconciliation with justice." Apparently, for Roxas, Estrada's blithe refusal to acknowledge any wrongdoing is proof of the ex-president's new-found humility.

Another presumptive (or is it presumptuous?) presidential candidate, Senate President Manuel Villar, did not even wait for the Sandiganbayan's Special Division to promulgate its verdict. He preempted the decision by declaring that he himself wanted to see Estrada acquitted. After the finding of guilt, he immediately supported calls for an amnesty. Apparently, for Villar, who as speaker of the House of Representatives famously impeached Estrada in 2000, plunder, if committed by a political ally, becomes a political crime. (What's a few hundred millions between friends?)

Other leaders have been equally presumptuous. Donald Dee of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry supported either pardon or amnesty for the convict, because either, he said, would forge political stability. National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, a frequent visitor to Estrada's luxurious villa in Tanay, Rizal, where the ex-president is under house arrest, said he supported pardon. "In the end," he said, "it is a matter between two presidents." (And all the while we thought it was about the facts of the case and the applicable laws.) Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, like Gonzales another friend of Estrada's, aired his hope that the President will pardon his close friend.

We have nothing against the use of humanitarian grounds, or even of overarching political considerations, in the setting of national policy. But policy is exactly what is missing in all this loose but unfortunately un-idle talk about pardon or amnesty. The country's political class may be divided, but now that one of its own has been convicted of plunder, it is instinctively closing ranks, and fast. For shame.

Our leaders talk all the time about the need for political will, about how our country can move forward only if we exercise political discipline and follow the rule of law. Apparently they don't mean it when their friends, or potential campaign boosters, are involved.

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Pale ink and memory

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



jokes are serious business.

We hurt so much then, so we laughed. Remember the joke about emaciated and fat dogs lining up for US visas? "Martial law is obviously good for you," the scrawny mutt told the obese mongrel. "So why do you want a visa?" he asked. The reply: "I want to bark."

Telling jokes against "Big Brother," George Orwell noted, were "tiny revolutions." Wit and humor have always been rapiers against dictators. They were then thrust into Bagong Lipunan camp followers: Fabian Ver, Estelito Mendoza, Juan Ponce Enrile, Eduardo Cojuangco, even a minor functionary in San Juan named Mayor Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

Few slashed with more effectiveness than Jaime Cardinal Sin. On his return from the Vatican conclave that elected Pope John Paul II, Sin told Marcos' Comelec Chair Leonardo Perez: "If you were in charge of the conclave, Leonie, I'd be pope today."

Jokes lashed martial law's institutional "scorch-earth" policy. "The opposition won 61 percent of the vote," announces Marcos' election agency. "Landslide," yell the crowds. "No, no, no, you don't understand," the Comelec says, "KBL got 96 percent."

"A good laugh is the best pesticide," Vladimir Nobokov once said. Were martial law jokes recorded? And what happened to protest songs, did they disappear when the most obvious forms of dictatorship crumbled, as in Eastern Europe?

Re-read "Bearing Witness to Martial Law Through Songs." UP professor Teresita Gimenez Maceda presented this perceptive pa-

per to the Ateneo University symposium on "Memory, Truth-Telling and the Pursuit of Justice." "Song is a powerful tool for remembering," she said. "And hardly anyone escaped the brutality of martial law... Collectively, the songs were a forum for dissent... our alternative press" to censored newspapers.

She included only songs she "personally witnessed performed," by communist guerrillas or political detainees. Among these were Heber Bartolome, Jess Santiago and Joey Ayala, "narrative poets" who recorded in music "a people's passage from fear and impotence, to anguish, then rage."

Bartolome's "Oy Utol, Buto't Balat Ka Na'y Natutulog Pa" (Hey Brod! You're All Skin and Bones and Still You Sleep!) decries passivity and "jolts the listener to a recognition of the ugly truth" of dictators. Santiago's "Huling Balita" sings of arbitrary arrests and the growing number of *desaparecidos* (the Jonas Burgoses of yesterday). In "Santa Filomena," Ayala uses the image of a lone swallow, blanketed with the silence of a razed barrio. "The power of song to trigger memories of atrocities... lies in the very absence of direct reference to acts of violence."

In his INQUIRER column, Randy David cautions: "As long as more than half of our people are forced to accept a future without hope, there will always be a constituency for political extremism. No constitution can stop a power grab. But a new political practice can make it needless."

"What are your plans?" Free Press editor Teodoro Locsin Sr. asked as we walked out of detention camp in the first release of journalists.

"I'll get out if I can to give the kids a chance," I replied.

"Ummm," murmured this towering editor whose writings proved that "the palest ink is better than the best memory."

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Lying in state

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



Indeed, that was the hallmark of Marcos, everything he did was a lie. His legal brilliance was a lie, his medals were a lie, his smiling martial law was a lie. He lied his way not just through life but through death, which is what "lying in state," the idiom for a wake, is also meant to suggest. The conservation of his remains at Paoay, a thing done only to saints and heroes, perpetuated the lie of his being larger than life well unto death.

Well, if I write about GMA and/or her regime in future, that is the title I will probably use, "Lying in State." Because that is the hallmark of this regime, too, everything it does is a lie. That is the hallmark of GMA, too, everything she does is a lie. Although I may be wrong about the "lying in state" in the sense that GMA may be able to perpetuate the lie of her being larger than life well unto death. Unlike Marcos, she does not have her own loyalists to attempt to transform her into the female version of El Cid.

That is the one thing the Marcos and GMA regimes have in common, the capacity to lie through their teeth. Well, they do have one other thing in common, in aid of that capacity, who is Juan Ponce Enrile. Enrile was one of martial law's chief architects, who triggered martial law by mounting (by his own admission on TV after Edsa, though he would deny it again later; what can one say, he and truth have never managed to coexist for very long) a fake ambush on his person. Which was the one lie the country really minded, everyone wishing it were true.

As lying goes though, Marcos did it so much better than GMA. It's the difference between a matador and a butcher, between an artist and an artisan. Marcos never swore on his mother's

grave, or that of Jose Rizal, whomever he deemed more sacred, that he would not run again. He refused to promise even verbally when pressed by Ed Jopson and company to do so that he would not seek a third term. You ask GMA to promise she will disappear after 2010, and the only thing she's bound to say is, "I'll even put that down in writing, in triplicate if you want." People who are not bothered by the crypt that holds the remains of the national hero won't be bothered by the papyrus, or its modern equivalents, that holds the essence of their being, also called their word.

Marcos didn't lie barefacedly, though he wasn't beyond it and did so when he disappeared from public view to get a kidney transplant, he lied through law and history, using all sorts of legal ruses to foment lawlessness and rewriting history, conscripting a slew of history professors for the purpose, to transform martial law from absolute ruin to sublime salvation. Sept. 21 thenceforth was celebrated as Thanksgiving Day, rubbing salt on the nation's wounds.

Today, if GMA lies with any subtlety only she knows about it. Think "Hello, Garci," think "Hello, Pidal," think "Hello, ZTE."

But whether tyrannies lie with subtlety or barefacedly, they share the same ultimate fate. Which is that they end up ignominiously. During martial law, no one could imagine a day when Marcos would not be there anymore. Today, 35 years after he imposed it, Marcos is just a crumbling bust in Agoo, its stone face windswept, bird-pecked and time-torn.

Some years from now, the kids will be asking about Erap's cell mate: Gloria who?

Reminder: Tomorrow night, "Tongues on Fire" launches at Peta Theater Center, No. 5 Sunnyside Drive, Barangay Kristong Hari, Quezon City 6-8 p.m. If you've got time, drop by. If you've got money, buy one. These are hard times, whatever government's figures say, or especially so since the opposite is true. Help books, help Anvil, help me.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2007

OPINION

A13

JDV between a rock and a hard place

HEARING THAT SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA was flying yesterday morning to Rome to attend the executive committee meeting of the Christian Democrats International of which he is vice president for Asia, I went to his residence early, hoping to get a few words on his son Joey's exposé before he flew out with his wife Gina. I found them having breakfast on Bonuan bangus, Vigan chorizo and mangoes specially flown in from Pakistan, a gift of President Pervez Musharraf. JDV had decided to skip the CDI meeting and attend to problems that may arise from the Senate appearance of his son from his first marriage where he alleged that First Gentleman Mike Arroyo had tried to bully him into dropping his firm's bid for the NBN deal. The Speaker was reticent about his son's testimony. I told him that in a social gathering the night before at the Mandarin Hotel, a European diplomat shared the observation of many that Joey's accusation had placed his father in a tough predicament. "Squeezed between a rock and a hard place" was how the diplomat put it. To which JDV replied, "Yes, because I love my son and I love Gloria, too."

Joey de Venecia will appear once more at the Senate this afternoon, but at this point he, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and even Mike Arroyo have become peripheral factors in the controversy. The focus has now shifted to the fate of the political union and partnership between President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Speaker. It has been a unique political relationship of almost 10 years (since JDV and GMA ran as a presidential ticket in 1998) that has weathered all kinds of troubles: the July 8, 2005 political turbulence caused by the Hyatt 10-Drilon-Cory Aquino faction, two impeachment attempts against GMA, one military-political coup attempt, two electoral exercises, various controversies such as Charter change, GMA's bouts with Fidel Ramos, issues against Mike Arroyo and others. Because the union remained strong and comfortable, it has been a steady influence amid all the turbulence, as evidenced, for instance, in the incredible pro-GMA rally of Lakas that the Speaker mounted

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



on July 8, 2005. JDV has been criticized for his staunch loyalty to GMA, but she herself has not been remiss in acknowledging his support.

The political partnership has also resulted in many economic and fiscal reforms through legislation and policies that have contributed to the economic prosperity now being noted by many international agencies. Moreover, the Philippines has been praised by the UN and the US government for its very innovative approach to the Muslim and terrorist problems, which reflects the excellent meeting of minds between the two partners.

Now there's the situation where the partners find their loved ones—his son Joey and her husband Mike Arroyo—at odds in the ZTE controversy. While they themselves have not said anything publicly to affect this partnership, there's fear that it could break up, human nature being what it is. Some Kampi leaders deemed loyal to Mike Arroyo are now decrying the fate of the majority coalition as a result of the exposé and blaming the Speaker for "failing to control his son." They ignore the fact that the young De Venecia was bred and schooled in the United States and has a strong independent streak that did not put much weight on the political predicament of his father. Some Kampi elements are making noises about reorganizing the chamber, while some Cabinet members have begun demonizing Joey as a "sore loser." There are reports that a disgruntled Lakas member would be propped up by Kampi and soon call for the father of the whistle-blower to step down. But JDV's allies won't take that sitting down.

A parting of ways between the two political part-

ners would be tragic as it would be ruinous not just for them but for the country. It would be a harbinger of political instability when the times call for working together to push the country forward. Sober heads should prevail and bring them to a dialogue. A word of caution, too, for Joey who comes across as a sincere crusader for truth and good government: some factions that have come close to him may be pushing their own agenda of sowing instability.

My friends from our old UPSCA days, Gus and Sonia de Leon, are appealing for support for a new initiative that they hope will create an environment of true peace "by improving the relation of the people and the military with God." They are asking for donations of Bibles to be used in Bible study meetings that soldier-volunteers are organizing in various communities covered by their units. This non-denominational project, called "Peaceful Orderly God-centered Intervention" (POGI), was conceived and organized by Army Maj. Gen. Fernando "Andy" Mesa (PMA class '75) when he was commanding general of the Second Division based in Tanay, Rizal (he's now chief of the National Capital Region Command based in Camp Aguinaldo). According to Mesa, "POGI's objective is to help communities improve their relationship with the Lord." But this "additional capability" to borrow military parlance, can also work to create a new relationship of trust and support between the people and the military units, because of mutual good behavior exhibited by both groups. The program has been successfully tried in some areas.

POGI is appealing for donations of Bibles so that each family can have its own copy. Gus de Leon points out that Tagalog Bibles are available at 10 percent discount from the Philippine Bible Society at UN Avenue Bible House, 890 UN Ave., Manila, Tel. 421-5792, 521-5785 and 524-6359. Each Bible, containing both the Old and New Testament, costs P100 while the New Testament alone costs P50. Donations may be delivered to POGI Project at 99 Mother Ignacia Ave., QC, Tel. 374-3005.

SOS call from a seaman

IF I WERE TO PUT TOGETHER THE FEATURE stories I have written about overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) they could probably fill one small volume. Come to think of it, I probably should put them between covers. They're part of our history as a people in search of the land of milk and honey.

One story was about a domestic helper who stabbed dead the Saudi princess she worked for and who had maltreated her for so long. The stabbing happened while the DH and her mistress were on a holiday in Cairo. The maid's tearful letters to home (the last from the Cairo Hilton were they were staying) intimated that something was bound to happen. I was able to get hold of a photocopy of the bloodstained letter to her family, which a Filipino consul found on the crime scene.

Another story was about someone who worked for Saudi royalty and who regaled me with her version of a "Thousand and One Nights" and photos of her wards, the desert picnics, the opulence that surrounded her.

And more. Stories told by OFWs (with photos to show, too) of their 1990 exodus across the desert when the Gulf War began. "Tomboy love" among lonely maids in Hong Kong. Husbands left behind to care for the children while their wives toiled abroad, kids left in the care of relatives and how they coped. Non-government organizations helping families of OFWs through savings and livelihood.

And how could one forget the Filipinos working in a Mediterranean luxury cruise ship as chefs, cooks, topnotch engineers, musicians, food and drink servers, spa attendants. They were proudly Pinoy and the best of the lot on the ocean blue, and so obliging to serve up *sinigang* and *adobo* even on formal dinner nights. Ah, but ever pining for the day they would be home.

I have saved some e-mailed letters, too, like the one from a doctor who sent a feedback to a column piece and who got feedback himself when I published it. The doctor said he was writing from a gas platform in the middle of the South China Sea. He narrated how his daughter begged him to stay for a day more so that she could present him to her classmates and teachers on family day. But

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



he had to leave ... in tears.

Here is a letter that I received from a seaman a few days ago. I did not translate it into English in order to retain the pathos and the bathos and its Filipino flavor. I merged two letters and moved some sentences around for coherence. The letter is a gold mine for theater. And more.

Dear Miss Doyo, lagi po akong nagbabasa ng PDI. Ako po ay seaman at kasalukuyan na nasa barko ngayon. Lagi ko rin pong nababasa ang column ninyo... May email ad kayo kaya po ako sa inyo sumulat. Gusto ko po sanang humingi sa inyo ng tulong kung pwede lang po naman kung hindi naman po ay balewalain ninyo na lang po... Nasa laot nga pala po kami galing Venezuela papuntang USA. Ako po ay kasasakay lang dito sa barko li-mang buwan akong naistambay kaya medyo kinapos din. Ganyan naman ang seaman pag napatagal ng tambay ay ubos din.

Ang aking pong anak ay apat... Ang panganay ay nasa home care na private sa kasalukuyan dahil sa kanyang sakit di naman malala pero ang sabi ng doctor ay kailangan daw ng mga isang taon gamutan kahit pabalikbalik siya doon kasi nga po ay di nakukumpleto ang gamutan. Pagbaba ko ay ilalabas din siya. Siya ay magtutwenty-six this October.

Mam kaya po ako sumulat... May kakilala ba kayo na magisponsor sa anak ko. Marami po akong naririnig na pwede humingi ng tulong sa PSCO o kaya ay sa Pagcor. Kaya nga lang po ay siguro proper kontak. Ang isa pa pong gusto kong malaman ay di ba kami pwede tulungan ng Owawa or SSS or Philhealth sa ganitong situation bilang isang OFW na sinasabi nilang bagong bayani. Ano po bang institution ang makakatulong sa mga ganitong problema ng OFW.

Ako po ay 54 na at malapit na rin pong magretire. Sabi ko nga po na di lahat ng OFW ay sinusuwerte. Swerte na rin dahil nakapagpa-aral ng mga anak kaya lang pag nagkaroon ka ng ganitong problema ay nauunawaan po ninyo ito. Di na nga po natapos ang aking bahay nakapending din. Sa kasalukuyan ay ititigil daw nila ang pagagamot sa anak ko at gusto na nila palabasin dahil di pa ako nakakakumpleto ng bayad umabot na po ng 60 thousand plus.

Dear Mam Ceres, maraming salamat po sa inyong reply at maski papano ay nabigyan ninyo ng oras ang aking email. Last April nga po ay ipinasok uli sa kamilang rehab and anak ko sa rekomendasyon ng doktor para daw maasikaso ang pagdetoxify sa isang gamot na nireseta niya na naadik ang anak ko. That time kami ang nabili ng gamot more than six kind ata yun plus ang bayad sa rehab ay 16k ang gamot niya ay umaabot ng 10k according sa reseta niya na iniwamin sa kamilang so called homecare. Unang buwan month of May nabayaran ko pa ang upa sa rehab. June di na ako makabayad pero nakakabili pa ako ng gamot.

Pinalalabas na ng doktor ang anak ko kasi di pa ako nakakabayad. At nagiwan na lang daw po siya ng reseta at kami na lang daw ang bumili. Nakatanggap ako ng email sa anak ko na ayaw namin sa kamilang so called homecare. Unang buwan month of May nabayaran ko pa ang upa sa rehab. June di na ako makabayad pero nakakabili pa ako ng gamot.

Respectfully Yours,
(Name withheld) 203232@eos.hanseaticfleet.com

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Marcos in retrospect (2)

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



whose lucky number was 7. Foreign observers such as Ian Baruma would say this, quoting a shrewd observer like Adrian Cristobal along the way: "...what Marcos and the First Lady wanted more than anything else was to be king and queen. They wished to shape the kingdom in their own image; like the Sun King, Louis XIV, Marcos wanted to be able to say, 'L'etat c'est moi.' According to Adrian Cristobal, "... Marcos sees the Philippines as a society of tribes." And he sees himself as the great tribal chief, the datu of pre-Spanish times. He destroyed much of the old network of family and regional loyalties to become the one and only patron, the king of Maharlika..."

Gleeck argued, convincingly I think, that to understand Marcos—his strengths and weaknesses—requires understanding the culture in which he operated, a culture he tried to master, but which ultimately mastered him.

This is how Gleeck described our political culture: "The Philippine political culture is ... personalistic but violent, religious but superstitious, corrupt but tolerant, hierarchical but distributionist, solicitous of form but not of content, legalistic, but careless of equity, media-obsessed and nationally vociferous with respect to rights but negligent to obligations."

Marcos also once said that Filipinos "will accept any kind of radical reform provided it is constitutional and legal." Whatever he might do, he did under the cloak of legality and proper form. Never mind if the substance came to be eroded by ill health and cronyism; until late in his regime's life, many were content to ask, "What is your al-

ternative?" and "Who will you replace him with?" to justify their continued support.

It was only when the economic gains came crashing down in 1982-84, that the public decided it was fed up with having no freedom and no more economic gains.

Gleeck wrote, bluntly, that Marcos' strategy was "steal first, buy later." He did it so well that people came to admire his daring. Nothing breeds success like more success. James Hamilton-Patterson quoted an unnamed associate of the President saying: "I sometimes think he became bored... he was very greedy. Yet it wasn't ordinary greed... I think he became bored a year or two after martial law because he didn't really have that much daily governing to do... I quite favor the idea that crony capitalism as they call it began ... when some of those cronies began to work out cunning schemes with him he was seduced by the intellectual challenge of it... He really wanted to know what he could get away with. It's a Filipino trait, this constant testing to see how far we can go. He loved all that."

In the end, as Marcos' health and grip on power weakened, he came to validate what is said to be the fundamental weakness of all strong man regimes: as the saying goes, nothing grows under the shade of a great tree. Marcos could not—would not—provide for a successor; and it was on the fundamental question of what should come after Marcos that his regime began to crumble, and fell.

Why do we look back at the lives of people like Ferdinand E. Marcos? As long as humanity is around, a fundamental question will always be, how is power gained, maintained and ultimately for what purpose is it wielded?

And that he himself, with his virtues (and he had many: love of country, love of learning, discipline, loyalty) and his defects (confusing form with substance, ignoring how the means power is acquired is as important as how you use it, tolerance of his supporters' mistakes, and his using armed force to compensate for some political weaknesses) are as much about our society's strengths and weaknesses, as they were about his own.

The conviction of a generation

THIS IS NOT HOW IT WAS SUPPOSED TO FEEL LIKE.

Six years ago, our young blood seething with rage, we marched down almost daily to that fateful intersection of our memories. "No classes until Erap resigns," we declared, both as news and as an urgent call to action on the front page of the Philippine Collegian. For several days and nights, we escaped from our dorms and walked out of our classrooms. Our schooling, we invoked the old slogan, should not interfere with our education. We held our classes in the streets.

Born in the twilight of dictatorship and growing up into adolescence as the first People Power faded into darkness, we were a generation reared in struggle, promise and betrayal. Burdened by the inspiration of a past uprising staged in that very same corner where we camped out, taunted by the criticism that our generation had lost, if it ever gained, its idealism, we rose and helped depose a President. It was our coming of age.

Erap's conviction today should have been a vindication for our generation. Looking back, didn't we, during those long nights in the shadow of Our Lady and Robinsons, look forward to the day when Erap would be justly punished for his crimes? Didn't we then yearn for that still distant moment as one of delayed euphoria that would be ours to relish?

And yet, as that moment finally came on Sept. 12, who among us, dispersed though we may have been since we took different paths, was not conflicted about the consequences of what we had, in our youth, achieved?

With memories of those restless days flooding my head and knowing what we know now about what would happen hence, I, for one, was consumed by a heady, contradictory feeling, something that has been welling up through the years: of reaffirmation and relief, yes, but also, curiously, of nagging, growing guilt and self-recrimination.

For nothing in the past six years, nothing during the trial, had changed the conviction that drove me and many of our contemporaries to Edsa: Joseph Estrada was guilty as charged—not only of the specific crimes he was accused of committing but also of betraying the people he claimed to stand up for. If anything, what has been revealed in the trial, his continuing life of luxury in Tanay, Rizal, as well as the political games he continues to play with his own coterie of tycoons and tycoons, have served to reinforce that view.

Unlike others, I cannot express regret over having supported Erap's ouster. If I have to do it all over again, I would do Edsa II all over again—perhaps with more vigilance, but with the same conviction.

Having said that, however, there is something palpably—outrageously—unjust in the way Erap is being punished even as Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, arguably guilty of worse crimes, continues to remain President; even as the Marcoses remain free to roam around; and even as other more corrupt and more criminal personalities are still out and going about their business.

It is not that Erap is more innocent because others are more guilty, as some people have effectively implied. But that these others remain not only out of reach of the law but also in power reinforces the feeling that I have somehow become party to a terrible injustice, an injustice that can only be corrected when all the Estradas, the Arroyos and the Marcoses of this country are also punished and when genuine justice prevails.

Somehow, Erap's conviction in the face of his predecessors' and successor's continuing liberty and firm hold on power is also a verdict on our generation.

Instead of the long-awaited moment of jubilation, the end of his trial has brought back a reminder of our unfinished task. And until we complete this, the vindication of our generation—of those of us who held classes in Edsa and who have hopefully learned from its lessons and mistakes—must wait.

See you in our homecoming.

Herbert Docena, 26, was with the Philippine Collegian, student newspaper of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, from 2000-2001. He now works as a researcher for a nongovernment organization.

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IN THE NEWS



Former President Joseph Estrada

BENJAMIN BASQUIRAS, JR.
Worker Representative

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Islanders save the Philippine teak

By Madonna Virola
San Jose, Occidental Mindoro

THERE ARE NO roads, only foot trails and bancas to reach Ilin and Ambulong, two of the three islands off San Jose town in Occidental Mindoro.

Ilin and Ambulong, which possess unique and rich biodiversity, have been chosen by the Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (MBCFI) to be its sites for efforts to save the vanishing Philippine Teak, locally known as "malabayabas."

Despite strong rain, schools and barangays have been planting the native trees in the two islands since July. On Aug. 20 and Aug. 26, the islanders planted more trees—proving that with genuine community organizing and sincere project management, conservation of the species is a "mission possible."

As they eased the seedlings from the recovery chambers, nursery technicians Emmanuel Lagrada and Eljesovolt Orsos quipped that "now we realize that it is really so easy to destroy the forest but so hard to restore it."

Dr. Emelina Mandia, team leader of the conservation project, estimated that 2,500 propagules of the native trees had been planted within the so-called biological corridor, a strip of forest connecting the remaining highly fragmented teak forests on the islands.

A Biology professor at the De La Salle University (DLSU)-Manila and founding member of the MBCFI, Mandia said the seedlings came from a nursery established by the foundation in September last year.

The Philippine Teak is found only in San Juan and Lobo towns in Batangas, and in Ilin and Ambulong, she said. It is considered an endangered species by the International Union on the Conservation of Nature and has been declared the Philippines' flagship species for tree conservation.

The Department of Environ-



YOUNG children choose to plant the "tagurirong," a native tree that bears fruits for birds and mammals. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IN THE KNOW

PHILIPPINE Teak (scientific name: *Tectona philippinensis*) is an endangered tree found only in Batangas and Mindoro. The small to medium-sized tree has a flaky bark and bears light purple flowers. It produces hardwood timber that is used for firewood and construction.

Philippine Teak is threatened by the destruction of its habitat and over-exploitation for timber. It also does not help that the timber of immature trees is preferred to that of mature trees. Because fewer trees reach reproductive age, the survival of the species is endangered. **Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research**

ment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom, through the Flora and Fauna International Flagship Species Fund, has provided program funding for 15 months.

Global warming defense

According to Mandia, only a few but highly scattered population of the vanishing Philippine Teak have remained due to logging and habitat destruction. "Its wood was a major material in the construction of Philippine railroads," she said.

But the trees are not being

planted to meet construction needs but to restore the habitat and population of the threatened flora and fauna and for the food and shelter for local birds and mammals, Mandia explained.

"More stable forests mean continuous supply of fresh water, cooler surrounding, more silt-free rivers and seas and better protection from calamities while maintaining stable carbon sinks, our best defense against global warming," she said.

She emphasized the need for not simply planting the trees but for nurturing them. "They are like kids that need our care before they could make it on their own."

The best people making this possible are the islanders of Ilin and Ambulong themselves, the natural caregivers of the Philippine Teak.

"At first, I thought this conservation project was too ambitious to win the cooperation of the people, especially that it ran counter to their source of livelihood," said community organizer Rolando "Boy" Ilustre, who is also an MBCFI member.

Charcoal making is the main source of livelihood of the islanders.

After a few weeks of convincing them and regular discussions in local radio programs, Malabayabas became a word of mouth. Ilustre is now even being addressed as "Mr. Malabayabas."

Eight barangays have passed resolutions to ban tree-cutting and fire-making in the remaining teak forests, while others are enacting similar measures, Ilustre said.

He organized a conservation group, "Bukluran para sa Punong Malabayabas sa Isla ng Ilin at Ambulong," to serve as his local partners.

"At least 250 elementary and high school students in three barangays have participated in the tree-planting activities," said Eleuterio Orsos, president of Bukluran and chair of Barangay Ipil.

Students, together with their parents, planted their seedlings.

Ilustre commended the all-out support of the village officials, especially barangay chair Adel Declito of Iling Proper, who helped him organize in the community.

Aside from Bukluran members, barangay officials of both islands, landowners, members of the Rotary Club of San Jose-Tamaraw, Philippine National Red Cross, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Philippine National Police Mobile Group and the Ilin Value-Added Management of Forest Services helped in the tree-planting activities.

"What is helping us most is perhaps the people's own observation of their barren lands, the obvious decline of plant and animal life, the stronger typhoons and prolonged drought hitting them," said Ilustre.

Biological corridor

The MBCFI will entrust a good number of the native trees to every school in Ilin and Ambulong to be planted and nurtured along the biological corridor.

In June and September last year, it organized assemblies among the local partners. In April and July this year, it conducted seminars on basic ecology and island dynamics.

Students and some faculty members of the DLSU-Manila have also been actively involved in the conservation efforts by sponsoring the trees planted by the island students.

A unique feature of the project is the local cooperative put up by the foundation in January

to sustain the conservation efforts. At first, the cooperative was composed of Bukluran members, but now, it is open to non-islanders.

Each capital share of the members has a corresponding

number of trees that will be obtained from the project's nursery and planted.

Plans are also afoot for the microfinancing of selected alternative livelihood projects of the cooperative members.

School kids support anti-dam petition

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

PUPILS IN NORTHERN QUEZON TOWNS ARE chipping in a few pesos from their daily cash allowance to help fund a campaign against government dam projects in the Sierra Madre mountain rivers and avert a possible environmental disaster.

"Grade school children have all been made aware of the importance of their signatures in the petition," Pol Derillo, board chair of the Metro Infanta Foundation (MIF), said in a report posted in the group's website over the weekend. "Some of them even made a vow to contribute a portion of their 'baon' just to show commitment."

Chyrralenin Suapero, a Grade 2 pupil of the Disciple Christian School in Infanta, said she was aware of the danger posed by the dams once these are completed. "I'm afraid that it will again bring floods to our town. I don't want that to happen," she said in Filipino.

Aside from signing the petition, Suapero said she contributed P5 from her P20 daily school allowance to support the anti-dam campaign. "My schoolmates have also affixed their signatures. Some of them also gave portions of their allowance. And we're all willing to contribute more to stop the dams," she said.

Her aunt, Shirley Valenzuela, said the girl had been extremely afraid of the prospect of their town being flooded again. "Their house was fully submerged during the 2004 flash floods. Only the roof was left

visible in the flood," she said.

Campaign

In November 2004, landslides and rampaging floods from the Sierra Madre submerged most parts of Infanta and General Nakar towns, killing hundreds of people and destroying millions of pesos worth of property.

Since last month, the environmental group Task Force Sierra Madre (TFSM) has been conducting a signature drive among the residents of Real, Infanta and General Nakar (RIN) to stop the government's plan to resurrect the Laiban dam project and construct the Kanan B-1 dam for a proposed hydroelectric plant.

Derillo said the signatures would be submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo and other concerned government officials.

"Before we asked the people, especially the schoolchildren, to sign the petition, we fully explained to them the contents of the document. The teachers painstakingly clarified and translated every word of the petition to their students for their full understanding," he said.

The Laiban dam, a project of the national government and

the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System, is designed to divert water from the Kaliwa River in the Sierra Madre and augment supply to Metro Manila.

It was supposedly part of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' plan of building an industrial complex in northeastern Luzon, but due to strong opposition from indigenous peoples, it was shelved. Only two diversion tunnels are left and serve as reminders of the aborted project.

Hydroelectric plant

The Kanan B-1 dam is intended to harness the resources of the Kanan River for generating a hydroelectric plant.

The Kaliwa and Kanan rivers are major tributaries of the Agos River that runs along General Nakar and Infanta.

One of the main arguments against the projects is that these lie between the Marikina and Real-Infanta fault lines.

Derillo warned that the dams could bring floods to the RIN area, particularly Infanta, considering the size of the Laiban dam and its water-holding capacity.

The Laiban dam will be 113 meters high and 500 meters wide, and its vast water reservoir can cover seven villages in Tanay, Rizal and Barangay Lumutan in General Nakar. The Kanan B-1 dam is smaller but with a diagonal tunnel that will run towards the northern area of Sierra Madre where the turbine to generate electricity will be constructed.

The risk arises from the fact

that both the Laiban and Kanan B-1 structures will be 20 and 10 kilometers away, respectively, from the Infanta fault line, according to Derillo.

With an Intensity 7 earthquake, the dams might crack and submerge the whole of Infanta, he said.

Studies

Citing studies conducted by three Chinese scientists sent by the United Nations to Infanta in 1996, as well as data from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, Derillo said the cracks in the fault line are active and might have direct link to the Intensity 8 earthquake in 1880.

He noted that the whole RIN area suffered an unprecedented destruction to as far as Mauban town in the south and Intramuros, Manila, in the west.

The bell towers of the San Agustin Church and the Manila Cathedral were broken during that earthquake, Derillo said. The first churches in Infanta and in Mauban were also devastated, he added.

"Given the risk of losing human lives, destruction of property and the continued disintegration of the environment, every resident should weigh these consequences with the so-called progress and/or even with the highest proof of structural integrity of the projects," he said.

"Why gamble human lives in the name of progress when the safety standards are highly vulnerable to compromise, oversight and corruption?"

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Angeles City mired in P484-M debt

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

ANGELES CITY—THE CITY GOVERNMENT, HOST to the Clark Freeport, is mired in a P484-million debt, its bureaucracy fat with 7,048 job orders and its operating budget depleted to less than 20 percent in the last four months, Mayor Francis Nepomuceno told reporters.

Asked how his predecessor, now Rep. Carmelo Lazatin, fared in financial management, Nepomuceno said: "He mismanaged it. He has different priorities. It seemed that the budget for one year was deliberately used up."

Nepomuceno said he disclosed to the media the current fiscal status of the city "to explain to the people why not so much services are being done."

"Our hands are tied (by the lack of funds), but we will not

allow this to distract us. We're exerting best efforts in addressing immediate concerns like solid waste management. We are stepping up tax collection efforts," he said on Tuesday.

Reached on Wednesday, Lazatin said his administration had obtained at least P309 million in loans. These are for the slaughterhouse (P20 million), socialized housing (P6 million), San Nicolas public market (P186 million), solid waste management (P43 million), hospital computerization project (P9 million) and classrooms (P45 million).

"If he can't do his job, he better leave. Why blame me for his

inefficiency and incapacity," Lazatin said.

In the briefing, city administrator Ireneo Alvaro said the city's total debts have shot up to P634.2 million, with the Lazatin administration decreasing that by paying P150.7 million.

According to him, the bulk of the debts originated from two "white elephants." These are the San Nicolas public market and slaughterhouse whose principals and interests amounted to P309.8 million and P44.7 million, respectively.

The payable amount next year is P122.4 million, with amortization running at P69 million.

Despite the heavy obligations,

Alvaro said these public enterprises had not been turning over income to the city government. The stalls have not been fully occupied, tainted by disputes arising from alleged irregularities in the distribution.

The slaughterhouse was certified by an agency to have a "wrong design." The height of the meat hangers, for instance, was intended for workers who are seven-footers.

The 6,028 job orders or personnel hired for short-term work for the mayor's office and 1,020 job orders for the legislative council from January to June entailed payments of P41.7 million, reports from the budget and accounting offices showed.

"It is excessive," Nepomuceno said of the work force, noting this paled in comparison to the 941 permanent employees.

He reported the "depleted cash" at the mayor's office, leaving him with only P15.4 million out of P53.8 million.

The non-office accounts for disaster awareness and gender and development, among other things, totaling P62.2 million, was down to P8.9 million.

"He's lying," Lazatin said of the number of job orders that Nepomuceno attributed to him. He said he only hired 500 people. Nepomuceno, he said, employed "4,000 people."

Alarm raised in Negros, Capiz on coco pests

By Felipe V. Celino
and Romy Amarado
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—GOVERNMENT officials in Capiz and Negros Oriental have raised the alarm over the possible spread of a pest that could damage coconut trees in the Visayas.

Capiz Gov. Victor Tanco Sr. has ordered the police to set up checkpoints at all of the province's entry points to prevent agricultural products that might contain the coconut leaf beetle (*Brontispa longissima*) from coming in.

The beetle has wreaked havoc on coconut trees in some parts of Luzon and is now seen as a threat in the Visayas, according to Brendan Trasmonte, head of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) in Negros Oriental.

Vigilance

Tanco issued his directive after Agriculture Undersecretary Oscar Garin asked local officials to help stop the spread of the infestation.

PCA Capiz manager Jeffery de los Reyes urged the people to be vigilant since the mature beetle and larva had attacked palms on Boracay Island in Aklan on Aug. 10.

The flat and slender beetle was sighted earlier in Samar and Boracay. Capiz remains free from the coconut pest.

The adult beetle and its larva stay between unopened leaflets of young coconut spears and feed on the soft tissue, causing decay and drying of affected parts which prevent the tree from bearing fruits, Trasmonte said.

Threatened industry

He said it would be vital to stop the pest from getting into Negros Oriental since the province has 80,518 hectares of coconut plantation. About 90,000 of its people directly depend on the coconut industry.

Tanco instructed Capiz police director Supt. Roberto Villanueva to coordinate with the provincial quarantine officer of the Bureau of Plant Industry and the PCA for the effective implementation of quarantine checkpoints.

He ordered Villanueva to work with authorities in the Roxas City airport and seaports.

Trasmonte said his office was now conducting a province-wide weekly monitoring of coconut plantations and beach resorts with coconut and other palm trees to prevent the entry of the pest.



FEEDING PROGRAM

A resident of Barangay Minto in Guinobatan, Albay takes his free meal at a relocation site for victims of past typhoons in the area. The feeding program was sponsored by the Taga Guinobatan Association (Tagas International) of America.

NINO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Public asked to help vs cell site attacks

LEGAZPI CITY—THE PHILIPPINE Army in Bicol yesterday appealed to villagers living near vital telecommunications installations to send information on possible future attacks by New People's Army rebels after the recent torching of towers and a relay station in Sorsogon and Camarines Sur.

On Monday night, about 20 NPA members burned a Globe Telecommunications cell site in Barangay Batang in Pamplona

town and its relay station in Barangay Tinanguihan in Libmanan town, both in Camarines Sur.

The burning of the relay station near the Maharlika Highway damaged its detachable cabin worth P1.6 million.

Police said the burning of the cell site caused damages of at least P150,000.

Sgt. Armando Escote, officer in charge of the 21st Civil Relations Unit of the Armed Forces

in Bicol, cited intelligence reports as saying that the attacks were due to the company's refusal to pay "revolutionary taxes" to the NPA.

Earlier, NPA members attacked a Globe tower in Barangay Sapangan in Bulusan, Sorsogon, on Friday. One guard was wounded.

The rebels disarmed the lone guard, identified as Emmanuel Forteo, before bombing the tower, police said.

An off-duty guard, identified as Pedro Fortuno, was wounded and brought to the Gubat Hospital.

Escote said Monday's burning was the third attack on the Pamplona site while the attack on the Libmanan relay station was the second, with the first attempt preempted by reports from civilians.

Ephraim Aguilar with report from Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon

More abuse cases being reported in Ifugao

BANAU, IFUGAO—THE NUMBER of cases of violence against women and children have increased abruptly in the province this year, but officials have traced these to vigilant reporting.

Joyce Niwane, provincial social welfare officer, said the number of cases of women and children abuse averaged 36 in the past years, but this year, 36 cases of violence against women and 26 cases of exploitation of children were listed.

"The increase is more on the awareness (that these cases must be reported)," said Niwane.

Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. said the taboo on making such cases

public had eased. He said that in the past, families had tended to keep cases of violence against women and children under wraps.

Taboo

"Residents are now coming out more openly," he said. "Families have begun to think of these as criminal cases which can no longer be settled through 'areglo' (traditional settlement)."

He said the signing of the Ifugao reproductive health code had also made people more aware of the abuses against women and children.

Ifugao is the second province after Aurora to come out with a

local reproductive health code after Congress had failed to pass a national code for the past seven years.

Health issues

The province would have a multisectoral team addressing reproductive health issues.

It is also tackling the prostitution issue that has become contentious since it was first reported four years ago.

Niwane said night spots, particularly videoke bars, had been inspected and it was found that there was indeed trafficking of women.

"There must be a syndicate because we see different sets of

women," she said.

She said the office was cooperating with the local governments to clamp down on this problem.

Banau has closed down a videoke bar on the national highway because of complaints from residents.

P30 for sex

The issue of prostitution in Ifugao first came out in 2003 and had a big impact on the campaign in the local elections in 2004.

A government agency had reported that some girls were offering sexual favors for P30.

Baguilat said his administration of the problem was exaggerated

by the media and caused him his bid for reelection as governor in 2004.

"It's higher now, around P1,500 to P2,000," said Niwane.

Chi Vallido, deputy director of the Philippine NGO Council for Population, Health and Welfare, said a study commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund noted that the towns of Tinoc and Asipulo have done of the highest rates of difficult pregnancies among its 30 pilot areas.

This occurred even though Ifugao has among the highest rates of prenatal visits, she said.

Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon



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GMA orders Cabinet men to face probe

From page A1

my is showing that appeals to our best hopes," Ms Arroyo said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita announced Ms Arroyo's directive to the Cabinet to attend the Senate hearing about businessman Jose de Venecia III implicated her husband in alleged kickbacks on the \$329-million broadband project.

That means Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Commission on Higher Education chief Romulo Neri and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves were given the go-signal to appear before the Senate inquiry.

"The President is trying to tell everybody that there's really nothing wrong with all this issue and the administration is willing to reveal all that it knows about the contract," Ermita told reporters.

Should be on same page

A Cabinet official said Mendoza was summoned last night to an emergency meeting of the President's official family on the broadband contract "to explain so that we can be on the same page." He said 70-80 percent of the Cabinet members attended the meeting.

"We want to know what's going on," the official said.

Ms Arroyo had earlier instructed Mendoza not to appear in the Senate probe and instead explain the broadband deal to the Supreme Court because "there is no politics" in the high tribunal.

Ermita said the Cabinet officials should be able to "set the record straight" amid allegations that the broadband project was

Abalos decides to face Senate but not today

By Beverly T. Natividad

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Benjamin Abalos has decided to face the Senate to answer questions about his involvement in the \$329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) deal.

But he will not be able to testify until next week, according to his lawyer Gabriel Villareal, who said the Comelec

chair received an invitation from the Senate on Tuesday night but would be unable to attend today's hearing because of "a previous engagement."

Villareal said he and his client would ask the Senate to reschedule Abalos' appearance for next week.

He said Abalos had been scheduled to travel to the Caraga region in line with preparations for the barangay and Sangguniang Ka-

bataan elections in October.

Abalos could not be reached for comment. But in a radio interview yesterday, he appealed to his fellow election commissioners to understand his decision to attend the Senate inquiry, saying he "owes it to himself to explain his side and for the public to know the truth."

Villareal said Abalos made the decision primarily to clear his name.

"He felt the main thing is, he

has nothing to hide, and so he should not hesitate to go," Villareal told the INQUIRER.

Earlier this week, Abalos said he would not attend the Senate inquiry so as not to "imperil" his position as Comelec chair.

As a constitutional officer whose post carries immunities, he said, his submission to Senate jurisdiction might set a precedent for future holders of his position.

attended by overpricing and that it involved massive payoffs.

In Malacañang to attend signing ceremonies of a P9-billion US assistance to Mindanao over the next five years, Favila said he was confident the Cabinet officials would be able to amply explain to the senators the circumstances surrounding the Chinese contract.

He said the country's bilateral relations with China would remain strong despite the scandal.

"I guess, the (Chinese) officials talking with DOTC officials know that. Those agreements, I suppose, they have all the necessary provisions there," said Favila, but added that it was up to Mendoza to rescind or push through with the deal.

Change of heart

Senators welcomed Malacañang's change of heart.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said Malacañang could have realized that the Supreme Court had

already upheld the Senate's constitutional right to compel officials to attend its legislative inquiries.

"The right is specifically provided for in our Constitution. Therefore all the powers that are needed for the efficient discharge of this constitutional duty should be granted to the Senate," she said.

But Sen. Panfilo Lacson believed Malacañang could only have realized it was at the losing end "because the public perception is Malacañang is hiding something."

Perception of guilt

"That's well and good because it saves us from tedious court proceedings. We would have ended up questioning this before the Supreme Court," he said.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan said it was only right that Cabinet officials attend the Senate hearings "if indeed they have nothing to hide" about the contract.

"To refuse to appear does not

only create the perception of guilt but also places the executive department in a constitutional collision course with the legislature," Pangilinan said.

"We assure the members of the Cabinet that their rights shall be respected and that they will be treated fairly and with due courtesy," he said.

During a caucus on Tuesday night, the Senate decided not to use its power to cite in contempt officials who had snubbed hearings on the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal and the broadband contract.

Anticipating another battle before the Supreme Court, the senators decided instead to exhaust Senate procedures to get these officials to attend the hearings.

Exercise prudence

"We will exercise prudence," Sen. Francis Escudero said. "We should stand on solid legal ground so that in case we go up

to the Supreme Court we would be armed with all the legal arguments to win the case," he said.

Under Senate rules, guests are invited to hearings as resource persons. If they refuse to appear, they are issued a subpoena. If they still ignore this, they could be cited for contempt and ordered arrested by the Senate.

Pangilinan said in the coming days, the Senate committee on rules which he heads would consolidate "guidelines" to aid the various committee chairmen in dealing with government officials who refuse to respect invitations or subpoena.

These officials have either invoked President Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464 that was struck down by the Supreme Court last year, Memorandum Circular No. 108 which spells out the use of executive privilege, or the sub judice rule.

"At the proper time, we will not hesitate to once again use

all means legal and necessary to thwart any and all acts that seek to prevent the Senate from performing its constitutional duties," Pangilinan said.

Administration split

While Ms Arroyo spoke of a new attempt to destabilize her administration, Mario Taguiwalo, president of the National Institute for Policy Studies, noted that the current controversy came from a faction of the administration.

"If this continues or intensifies, it talks about a division within the administration that will make the remaining years of the President quite difficult," Taguiwalo said.

Both attempts to impeach Ms Arroyo last year in the midst of the "Hello Garci" controversy failed because of her overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives, but that could change if there is a split in the administration, analysts said.

Lack of alternatives

What would help Ms Arroyo would be the lack of alternatives to her and the apathy of the middle class, which has been in the vanguard of the two previous people power movements, said L. Scott Harrison, managing director of risk analysts Pacific Strategies and Assessments Ltd.

"If there was a knight in shining armor that could come on the scene and replace her, then the public might be more amenable to a people power solution or an impeachment proceeding but they recognize that if they get rid of her, who are they going to get?" he said. *With a report from Reuters*

Luli leads counterattack against Joey de V

From page A1

"He's like, *hay naku*, it's me again. Can't they see other people? I'm thin ... I'm a smaller target *pero ako pa rin* (but it's still me)," she said quoting her father.

Malacañang at the same time gave the Office of the Ombudsman the green light to investigate the son of Speaker Jose de Venecia for possible violation of the antigraft law.

Yesterday, De Venecia admitted seeking medical help in New York in 1984 to end his addiction to marijuana he developed while studying in Boston.

"I'm proud ... I got well," De Venecia told the INQUIRER in reaction to presidential daughter Luli Arroyo's scathing remarks against him.

"If she's saying that I have brain damage, how come I have small successes in my life," De Venecia said referring to his pioneering role in the broadband industry in the country and his occupying board seats in several companies.

"I have credibility," he said.

De Venecia said he knew Luli was just trying to protect her father.

"People make mistakes. What's important is for you to correct them," De Venecia said.

"Even Bill Clinton was questioned for marijuana use," he added, referring to the former US president.

He said it was "below the belt" for Luli to hit him on account of his past drug problem.

"I've nothing against the President, Luli, Mikey and (Datto). As I said I continue to stand by my President," De Venecia said.

De Venecia told the Senate inquiry that his company, Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), had submitted an unsolicited proposal for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project that would provide the government bureaucracy a nationwide telecommunications platform.

Corrupt practice law

"Yes, he can be sued under the antigraft and corrupt practices law. The law is very clear,"

said Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol.

He told reporters that law enforcement agencies such as the Ombudsman could initiate the investigations against young De Venecia for "directly or indirectly ... intervening, getting involved in government contracts."

Apostol said the law, Republic Act No. 3019, barred the involvement of officials, their family members and other relatives "up to third degree of consanguinity." Penalty is from four to six years in jail.

Case strong

Asked whether the Ombudsman had a strong case against De Venecia III, he said: "Yes. He made an admission before the Senate."

When asked about the motive of the Speaker's son in crucifying the First Gentleman and members of the Cabinet, Apostol said:

"He is a businessman. His objective is business."

Section 5 of RA 3019 prohibits "certain relatives" of the President of the Philippines, Vice President, the Senate President, or

the Speaker of the House of Representatives, "to intervene, directly or indirectly, in any business, transaction, contract or application with the Government."

The ban covers the spouse or for any relative, by consanguinity or affinity, within the third civil degree.

Section 4 provides that "it shall be unlawful for any person having family or close personal relation with any public official to capitalize or exploit or take advantage of such family or close personal relation by directly or indirectly requesting or receiving any present, gift or material or pecuniary advantage from any other person having some business, transaction, application, request or contract with the government, in which such public official has to intervene."

No presidential meddling

Apostol, however, took comfort in De Venecia's assertion that President Arroyo had nothing to do with the ZTE deal.

"The President does not med-

dle in such deals," said Apostol, but said, "that is one of the issues where I should be dumb," when asked if the revelations of the young De Venecia could affect the relationship between President Arroyo and the Speaker.

De Venecia is the president of the ruling party Lakas-CMD, while Ms Arroyo serves as its chair.

AHI bid legal

On his being liable for violation of the antigraft law as a result of his bidding for a government project as a son of the Speaker of the House, De Venecia said he had been advised by his lawyer that AHI's bid was legal and aboveboard.

"In a (build-operate-transfer) project, there is a process ... of evaluation ... of bidding. Where is the Speaker involved in that?" De Venecia said.

De Venecia said his father was not in a position to influence the decisions of the government agencies involved in going through his company's

BOT proposal.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago also went on the offensive against De Venecia, calling him a "mere stool pigeon" out to topple the administrations and whose "bizarre and sensational" antics have no place in the Senate.

"He is not a mere disgruntled bidder. The mere fact that this is so highly publicized and that the angle has always been who has been corrupt in the Arroyo administration [means that] a lot of money has been spent," said Santiago.

She noted that the company of De Venecia had only a paid-up capital of P300,000 and yet is pursuing billions of peso worth of public funds.

"Who is funding this young man? He is a loose cannon but he is not as wild as he seems to be. I think he is merely fronting for a group whose ultimate goal is to create political instability so that President Arroyo will be removed before her term officially ends in 2010, and install another," Santiago said.

House coalition cracks up, JDV could lose speakership

From page A1

The Speaker's allies among Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats moved quickly Tuesday night to try to avert a House "shake-up" that might lead to De Venecia losing his post.

A Lakas congressman told the INQUIRER that party members met with the Speaker for "about an hour" after the session adjourned to discuss scenarios.

Backlash

"We expect a backlash," said the senior administration congressman close to De Venecia.

He spoke on condition of anonymity as the situation in the House "remains volatile" following the younger De Venecia's testimony in the Senate on Tuesday that the President's husband had threatened him into "backing off" from the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

"The best-case scenario is status quo. The worst case is that there'll be a shake-up," the congressman said.

Speaker De Venecia also met with his allies yesterday morning for breakfast, according to a congressman.

Among those in attendance were the five Deputy Speakers—Cebu Rep. Raul del Mar, Camarines Sur Rep. Arnulfo Fuentes, Maguindanao Rep. Simeon

Datumanong, Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson and Mindoro Occidental Rep. Amelita Villarosa. They were joined by Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita and Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles.

Crazy

Iggy Arroyo made no effort to hide his dismay over the younger De Venecia's accusation against his brother.

The President's brother-in-law described the testimony as "crazy" and indicative of a "character flaw" in the Speaker's son.

"I'm disappointed with what's happening," he said. "He's lying."

Credible

But Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin said the younger De Venecia's testimony was "really credible," noting that the businessman was reciting from memory—not from a script—and could not be swayed to whatever direction by senators.

Locsin said the people implicated by the businessman should "come up with an equally credible and an equally detailed story."

"It can't be dismissed by simply saying, 'you're telling a lie,'" he told reporters.

Garcia bloc

The Garcia bloc, which is calling for the Speaker to take a

leave of absence, is led by Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, who challenged De Venecia for the speakership in July.

Garcia is a key figure in Ms Arroyo's party, the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) whose president is Villafuerte. Kampi was the party founded by Ms Arroyo in 1998. Her husband was instrumental in its revival in recent years.

Along with congressmen from De Venecia's Lakas-CMD, Kampi members form the majority of the administration coalition in the House.

"We will support a leave of absence so that he will not be accused of interfering or influencing the investigation," Villafuerte told the INQUIRER. "It's a matter of *delicadeza*."

But Villafuerte, Garcia's chief campaigner during the race for speakership, remained ambiguous as to the possible direction of the coalition in light of the younger De Venecia's accusation against the President's husband.

"The scenario is just unfolding," Villafuerte said.

Until then, he said the father should make clear his position on the controversy.

"The typical De Venecia scenario is to be ambivalent on many things," the Kampi president said. "But he should an-

swer many questions. Does he agree with his son? If not, does it mean that his son is lying?"

In a statement on Tuesday, the Speaker said "both my son and the First Gentleman must be transparent to our people."

"The people have the right to know the truth, nothing less," he said. "It's now for the Senate to determine if [my son] was straightforward in telling the unvarnished truth. My son has his own moral principles to guide him. He is his own man, strong enough to stand up for them."

Not act of Juan

An ally of both the President and the Speaker yesterday sought to minimize the damage to the Kampi-Lakas coalition caused by the younger De Venecia's Senate testimony.

Davao Rep. Prospero Nograles, Lakas secretary general, insulated the Speaker from whatever his son had told senators about the NBN project.

"You are not your son's keeper," he said at a press forum in Quezon City. "The father is not the son, the son is not the father ... The act of Pedro is not the act of Juan."

Nograles said the controversy had not had any effect yet on the relationships within the coalition.

"But you know, in this kind of situation, you live minute by

minute, hour by hour, day by day, and week by week," he said. "You have to keep on assessing it because this is such a high-profile thing."

The only problem

Do they think the backlash will result in De Venecia losing the Speaker's seat? "That's the worst case," the senior Lakas congressman said.

The congressman said the overwhelming number of members of Lakas would rally around the Speaker in the event members of the House who are more loyal to Ms Arroyo than De Venecia decided to make a move against the House leader.

"We will support the Speaker. We have the truth on our side," he said.

"We also want to protect the President by pushing for the rescission of the \$329-million NBN deal with ZTE Corp.) because the contract entered into is onerous from which ever angle you look at it," he added.

"Our only problem is the First Gentleman. He has always been," the congressman said.

Good relations

Ilocos Norte Rep. Roque Ablan, a Lakas stalwart and a confidante of the Speaker's, confirmed that there was in-

deed a meeting at the Speaker's office on Tuesday night.

"It was agreed that the Speaker will maintain good relations with the President and Malacañang," Ablan said.

Ablan, along with Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco and La Union Rep. Victor Ortega, was among the first to confer with the Speaker on Tuesday afternoon after the younger De Venecia testified at the Senate hearing.

A member of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) told the INQUIRER that a handful of Kampi members was in the Speaker's office on Tuesday night.

He said the Kampi members included Deputy Speaker Mindoro Occidental Rep. Amelita Villarosa, Nueva Ecija Rep. Rodolfo Antonino and Palawan Rep. Antonio Alvarez.

"The Speaker was telling them to relay to Kampi that all's well (between him and the President)," the NPC congressman said.

The NPC lawmaker said it was suggested that De Venecia call up Ms Arroyo to clear the air following the allegations made by his son against the President's husband.

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NEWS

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US pledges \$190M for Mindanao

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE UNITED STATES HAS PLEDGED up to \$190 million in assistance to the Philippines over the next five years to promote economic development projects in Mindanao.

The agreement for the grant was signed in Malacañang in a ceremony presided over by President Macapagal-Arroyo and US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney. The ceremony was witnessed by government, private sector and civil society leaders from across Mindanao.

Under the Mindanao Peace and

Development (MPAD) Agreement, the Philippine and US governments will continue working together to improve the lives of the people of Mindanao by developing infrastructure and expanding economic opportunities.

"The American people are proud to work alongside our Filipino partners to help bring peace and prosperity to Mindanao; improve the lives of Mindanao families, and support the overall development of the Philippines," Kenney said in a statement released by the embassy shortly before the signing.

The United States Agency for In-

ternational Development and the Mindanao Economic Development Council will oversee implementation of activities under the MPAD Agreement.

The President had called for "deeper and broader" American participation in the Mindanao peace process and development considering the decreasing US military assistance to the Philippines.

Washington has repeatedly assured the Philippines, an important security ally since the end of World War II 62 years ago, of its commitment to promote peace and economic progress in southern Philippines.

Teachers seek probe of CHED call center lab

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE LEADER OF A MILITANT teachers group yesterday called on Congress to investigate alleged irregularities surrounding the P500-million call center laboratory project of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

The supposed irregularities included an "apparently" rigged bidding, the ballooning of the project cost by an additional P200 million from its original pricetag of P300 million, and irregular cash advances amounting to P75 million, Alliance of Concerned Teachers chair Antonio Tinio alleged.

"All the signs of plunder are there," Tinio claimed.

The ACT leader called on both the Senate and the House of Representatives to conduct an investigation.

League of Filipino Students president Vencer Crisostomo urged an investigation by independent bodies.

Gonzalo Duque, president of the 160-member Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities, said he would look into the matter.

Duque is now in the United States and was contacted by phone.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach CHED acting chair Romulo Neri and his predecessor, ex-CHED head Carlito Puno, for comment on Tinio's allegations.

Flagship project

Neri's staff said that he had already ordered an investigation into the commission's Integrated Multisite Business Process Outsourcing Incubation Contact Centers (IMBPO-ICC), otherwise known as call center laboratory development project, to check if the project was on track.

The IMBPO-ICC is a flagship project of the Arroyo administration.

Puno earlier ordered the implementation of the project. He proposed government funding for the project during the time of then Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin.

But the budget of the campus-based IMBPO-ICC was only approved and released to the CHED during Neri's term as budget department head.

The ambitious project aims to assist state universities and colleges in setting up their own call center training laboratories.

However, the commission allegedly jacked up the cost of the project by allowing schools to build separate buildings for the call center laboratories, according to Tinio and CHED employees and staff members, who claimed to have knowledge of the project.

The CHED insiders showed the INQUIRER copies of documents related to the project.

Biggest share

They said the commission also allotted state-run Polytechnic University of the Philippines a lion's share of P200 million from the original P300-million budget, contrary to the original plan to put up call center laboratories in 25 selected state universities and colleges, or SUCs, nationwide.

The other SUCs include the Technical University of the Philippines, Benguet State University, Pangasinan State University, Don Mariano Marcos University, Isabela State University, Tarlac State University, Nueva Ecija State Science and Technology University, Laguna State Polytechnic College, Batangas State University, Western Visayas College of Science and Technology, Leyte Normal University, Mindanao Polytechnic State College, Bicol University, and the Mariano Marcos State University.

CHED insiders also questioned the Feb. 19 awarding of the contract to a consortium, the only one prequalified by the commission's bids and awards committee in October 2006.

The commission gave the original P300-million deal to the group composed of E-Services Global Solutions Inc., Drishti Philippines Inc., Information Transmission Computer Corp. and Hillmar's Construction Corp.

Some CHED oldtimers call the consortium "favored bidders."

The losing bidders were ePLDT (Philippine Long Distance Communications) and another consortium which groups Informatix, Ione Resources Five 9, Suma Kumugia and the Singaporean firm Sandz Solution.

The commission also advanced more than P45 million in payments to E-Services Global Solutions, the project contractor, for the supposed civil works it had accomplished, CHED documents also showed.



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Murder raps against suspect in Delgado slaying dropped

Not enough evidence vs stepbrother, says DOJ

By Leila B. Salaverria and Tina G. Santos

MURDER AND FRUSTRATED MURDER complaints filed against businessman Luis Gonzalez for the death of his stepbrother Federico Delgado have been dismissed by the Department of Justice. Similar charges against his driver Antonio Buenaflor were also dropped.

The DOJ said that apart from the witness' lack of credibility, the suspects were in another place at the time of the killing. Delgado was killed earlier this year in Malate, Manila.

Acting Manila City Prosecutor Cielitolindo Luyun gave weight to Gonzalez's alibi that he was in the hospital. He said 28 "unbiased and disinterested witnesses" from the Makati Medical Center attested to Gonzalez's presence at the facility before, during and after Delgado's killing on March 10.

Luyun also questioned the statement of witness Annalisa Pesico who was in Delgado's house when he was killed, saying there were inconsistencies in her statements given the physical evidence. He also said there was undue haste in the investigation and procedural lapses.

Luyun gave no weight to a statement by a handwriting expert consulted by the police that Gonzalez wrote the name "Franco" in blood at the crime scene. He noted Gonzalez's family had presented another expert who contradicted the finding.

The prosecutor took note of forensic pathologist Raquel Fortun's recommendation that the evidence be reconsidered.

'Credible evidence'

"The DOJ panel did so on the basis of the absence of any credible evidence. We expected this. Even at the outset, we believed in and maintained the innocence of our brother. In the end, truth has triumphed," Gonzalez's sister Ruby Gonzalez Meyer said in a statement.

She said the family would focus on Gonzalez, estranged husband of singer Kuh Ledesma, who is reportedly battling drug addiction.

Gonzalez and Buenaflor were charged with murder and frustrated murder for the death of Delgado and injuries sustained by Pesico. Delgado was stabbed five times inside his Malate house while Pesico was mauled, tied up and dragged to the dressing room. The assailants left after searching the room. Pesico said she was able to free herself and call the police.

But the Delgado family did not consider the decision a setback. "It's very unfortunate but we do not consider this a setback, and certainly we have not lost any hope," Jose Mari Delgado, the victim's brother, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

In his resolution, Luyun acknowledged it was physically possible for Gonzalez to get out of MMC, be at the crime scene then return to the hospital. But to do that, he said Gonzalez had to connive with hospital personnel.

Witness

As for Buenaflor, he said there was another witness who corroborated his statement that he was in a Roxas Boulevard restaurant when the crime was committed.

Luyun said Pesico's statement that she was told to go the dressing room and was then covered with clothes and a towel on her face meant, as Gonzalez and Buenaflor pointed out, she could not have had a clear view of the suspects.

He added that the injuries she suffered, including a swollen eye and an open head wound, would also impair her ability to identify the attackers.

Pesico also misled probes about her educational background and her relationship with Delgado, initially saying she was a friend then later identifying herself as his girlfriend, Luyun said.

There were also no fingerprint or blood, hair and fiber analyses and "most importantly," a sworn statement from the security guard of the Mayflower building where the incident took place, Luyun added.



NO CLASSES

Schoolchildren were sent home yesterday in Malabon City after classes were suspended because of floods brought by heavy rains. (See story on page 20).

JOAN BONDOC

Managing Business with a Heart



A group of eleven medical specialists, holding clinics in different hospitals, decided over coffee to set up their own clinic. Thus was born Health Serv Los Baños on June 12, 2002, the brainchild of Ma. Lisa Angsanto, its president and CEO. Borne out of Dr. Angsanto's passion for her profession and a strong desire to improve the quality of Filipino health care services, Health Serv Los Baños was established as a multi-specialty diagnostic clinic with 45 specialists on its roster of doctors.

As work on the initial phase of the company began, Dr. Angsanto approached BPI Family Savings Bank for financial assistance in the acquisition of medical equipment. What BPI Family Savings Bank saw in Dr. Angsanto was someone who managed her business with genuine passion and a heart. Truly, a worthy partner.

Apart from practicing medicine, Health Serv likewise participates in medical missions and outreach programs, donating clothes, food and other necessities to the poor and less fortunate. Dr. Angsanto believes that doctors have a duty to serve those that need healthcare and medical services the most. "Be passionate about what you do. Only then can you truly improve the lives of others." Her charitable nature has built a thriving business, giving it more heart. Plans are underway to expand Health Serv's clinic in Los Baños to a 50-room hospital in the near future.

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THESE two classmates don't seem to mind the rising floodwaters after they were told to skip classes and return to their homes because of the bad weather.

JOAN BONDOC

Classes cancelled in Malabon due to floods

By Nancy Carvajal

CLASSES IN ALL LEVELS IN Malabon City were suspended before noon yesterday due to floods caused by heavy rains that made all its major streets in the city impassable, its chief local executive said.

City Mayor Canuto Oreta announced the suspension at around 11 a.m. following reports from the city's disaster coordinating council that the water level rose in the streets and several residential areas due to

strong rains that started early morning.

According to the Department of Education guidelines, all classes up to the college level would only be suspended when Signal Number 3 is up, Signal Number 2, up to the high school level, and Signal Number 1, up to the elementary level.

Based on radio reports, the Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration had not announced any storm signal but said, in an early Wednesday forecast, that-

Metro Manila would continue to experience heavy rains, due to an enhanced southwest monsoon.

Oreta also said that flooding in the city had worsened even in the absence of storm signals due to the still unfinished mega dike project expected to solve the perennial flooding problem in North Metro cities.

"The unfinished project aggravated our flood problems. Residents, despite being used to floods, are now getting impatient and want to know when

flood control project will be completed," Oreta said.

He mentioned that affected residents, with the help of the city's engineering office, have started putting up sandbags to serve as dikes to prevent flood water from entering their houses.

While based on the report of the City's Police Tactical Operation Center among the streets that had been declared impassable were M.H. del Pilar and Gov. Pascual Streets, Letre Road, Tunsuya, P. Aquino Avenue, and Dagat-Dagatan.

METROBRIEFS

Fire hits Rustan's

A TWO-HOUR fire hit the fifth floor of the Rustan's Commercial Corp. headquarters in Edsa, Mandaluyong City yesterday morning, destroying equipment and property worth P4 million. Victorino Tablay, arson investigator of the Mandaluyong City Fire Department, said witnesses saw black smoke coming out of the 200 El Mercasol Building, an indication of a strong fire early morning. Firemen managed to control the fire at around 8:40 a.m. Tablay said the entire floor, including P4 million worth of computer and office equipment and records, were destroyed in the blaze. No one was reported killed or hurt in the incident as it happened before office hours. An investigation on the fire's origin is pending, but Tablay said they would look at the possibility that the blaze could have been caused by faulty electrical wiring.

Kristine L. Alave

Cable wire theft

POLICE arrested two of three men who allegedly stole thousands of pesos worth of aerial cables belonging to a telecommunications company last week in Quezon City after police caught them red-handed at the crime scene. The suspects, Dennis Lazaga and Arsenio Bendollo, both residents of Brgy. San Vicente, reportedly stole P50,000 worth of PLDT aerial cable wires installed along C.P. Garcia near Phivolcs, Brgy. San Vicente, Quezon City, on Sept. 14 at around 10:30 p.m. Police patrolling the area spotted the three men allegedly cutting aerial cable wires along the street. Two of the three suspects were captured, while one managed to escape.

Kenneth M. del Rosario

Grammar workshops

AN ADVANCED English grammar workshop will be held from Sept. 22 to 23 from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and lingual behavior modification and pronunciation workshop on the same days from 2-6 p.m. at The Corporate Mind Training Room at the Mega Plaza on ADB Ave. cor. Garnet Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The course developer is communications specialist, linguist and professional speaker Josephine Gomez. For registration details, call 687-7898 or 0919-876-3770.

2 killed in foiled heist in busy Makati street

By DJ Yap

A DRIVER AND A BYSTANDER were shot and killed by armed robbers along a busy intersection in Makati City at past noon yesterday following a botched heist involving more than P6 million in cash.

Two others were wounded after the suspects opened fire in the middle of the Gil Puyat-Makati Avenue intersection at their target, a blue-gray Isuzu D-Max (plate number ZHB-908), the police said.

Aboard the vehicle were driver Jon Jon Flores, 29, and two other employees who work for businessman Benjamin Bitanga, who was not in the car at the time of incident, said Makati police chief, Supt. Gilbert Cruz.

The employees had just withdrawn P6.626 million from the International Exchange Bank and were on their way back to work when three gunmen suddenly shot at the vehicle at about 12:45 p.m.

Instead of stopping, Flores maneuvered the vehicle through traffic until it hit a steel



ARMED robbers tried to snatch around P6 million in cash from three employees inside this van who had just withdrawn the amount from a bank. After shooting the driver and a bystander, the suspects were able to escape, leaving behind the money inside the van.

JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN

barrier in front of the Pacific Star building.

A bystander, Erlindo Barroga, was hit by stray bullets and rushed to the M-Tech Medical Hospital, but he died while un-

dergoing surgery. The two employees, whose names were not immediately known, were also hit and rushed to the hospital.

After the police arrived, the suspects abandoned the robbery

attempt and fled on board a L300 van (UFD 212) and a Mitsubishi Adventure (WJT 294) that they later abandoned along Kalayaan Avenue, Cruz said.

"I personally returned the

two bags left in the van to Mr. Bitanga. I even counted the money in front of him," he added. Cruz said there were no leads yet on the identities of the suspects.

'Violent frats accept only neophytes who submit to hazing'

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSOR at the University of the Philippines said fraternities with histories of violence generally did not accept neophytes unless they agreed to hazing.

Speaking at the forum "Et tu brod? Searching for Justice Against Fraternity Violence" held Tuesday at the UP Law Center, College of Psychology director Jay Yacat said neophytes were treated as outsiders unless they proved they could obey without question.

"They have no rights and privileges like brods (fraternity brother)," Yacat said. This made it easier for initiators to inflict pain on the recruit.

Hazing, he said, takes many forms like sleep deprivation, extreme calisthenics, forced feeding of disgusting food, shameful acts, extreme drunkenness, and/or verbal, sexual and physical abuse (beating or paddling). He added

that most neophytes agreed to this kind of initiation for conformity and de-individualization or a desire to be part of a group.

Fraternity brothers, Yacat said, undertook hazing believing "the (neophyte) will not squeal." Should a participant object to hazing, "it is difficult to go against the other members of the fraternity."

When accidents resulting in serious injuries or deaths occur, the "code of silence" usually prevailed. It would then be difficult to prosecute without witnesses to the crime.

Different culture

Yacat said most fraternities now were formed under a different culture, unlike before when they were guided by socio-civic and political principles. He said violence was promoted by certain fraternities to assert superiority over other groups.

Violence, like "rumbles" with rival organizations, was being used by some fraternities as a means of defense from real or imagined threats, to promote cohesiveness, and to test the loyalty of members, he said. "Conformity pays," Yacat stressed, adding that it usually ensured the protection of a member. "But it is ironic when a member would not be needing protection if he had not figured in a rumble."

Fraternity rumblings, he noted, were characterized by spiral escalation and were indiscriminate. Fraternities, he said,

NBI to quiz funeral parlor exec

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation will summon the manager of a funeral parlor that took the body of suspected hazing victim Cris Anthony Mendez from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

Lawyer Romulo Asis, chief of the NBI Anti-Terrorism Division tasked to handle the case, said they have already issued a subpoena to the manager of St. Peter's Memorial Chapels.

Asis said they would ask details about the clothes worn by Mendez the day he was taken to the funeral parlor, among others. "The clothes he wore may not be a big deal to others, but for us it could say a lot. We're trying to gather evidence that would corroborate even

small details," he explained.

Asis added that the funeral parlor official would also be asked why they failed to report that Mendez's body was brought to them, a standard operating procedure in medico-legal cases, and who ordered it to be embalmed and later released without the family's consent.

Asis said they had received information that it was Dr. Francisco Cruz Jr., the assistant chief of the VMMC ophthalmology department, who allegedly ordered the release of Mendez's body. Cruz was also the one who took Mendez to the hospital around 1 a.m. Aug. 27.

The NBI also said that Cruz could face charges for obstruction of justice for reportedly refusing to cooperate in the investigation.

He said respect was a more "important currency" than material resources among fraternities, adding that "groups compete for prestige."

Yacat said fraternities were "super competitive" and expected nothing less from members.

He said the idea that fraternities were synonymous with violence overshadowed the socio-civic and political contributions of the organizations.

As for the death of Cris Anthony Mendez, a senior public ad-

ministration student, allegedly from hazing, Yacat said, he hoped the case "will have finality."

He pointed out that he had been monitoring fraternity-related violence since the death of another student, Nino Calinao, in 2000 but nothing had changed. "Only the names change but there has always been a similar reaction, a knee-jerk reaction to the incident," he said.

Meanwhile, officials of different UP colleges met yesterday to discuss alternative ways to end fraternity-related violent incidents.

Options

A source requesting anonymity told the INQUIRER that among the options being eyed was an outright or selective ban of fraternities that figured in rumbles or hazing.

"We are looking at this from all angles and we are even reviewing scientific studies to come up with a solution," the source said.

He told the INQUIRER that based on a 1996 study conducted by Sociology professor Ricardo Zarco, the Sigma Rho fraternity had the most number of involvement in violent incidents in the university.

From 1991 to 1994, Zarco's study, based on 144 police reports, showed the organization figured in 32 fraternity-related violent incidents, while the second group was involved in 25. The source said statistics had not changed much since.

DID YOU KNOW

TAFT Avenue, which stretches from Edsa in Pasay City to P. Burgos Street in Manila, was named after the late William Howard Taft, the first American governor-general in the Philippines (1901-1904) who later became US President (1909-1913).

In June 2004, then Sen. Sergio Osmeña III filed Senate Bill No. 497, which sought to rename Taft Avenue to Sen. Jose W. Diokno Avenue, after the nationalist senator who served from 1963 to 1972. The bill has yet to be enacted.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

Mike Arroyo's vacation itinerary

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



come his way, including trumped-up charges.

The Filipino people admire Joey de Venecia for his courageous act.

One of the lessons I learned from my father was that in dealing with others, one should never be a bully.

A bully, my Old Man said, may oppress some people some of the time, but he can't oppress

all of them all the time; he will eventually meet his match.

The President and Mike Arroyo's eldest son, Congressman Mikey, said the young De Venecia could be liable under the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act for bidding for a government project despite his being the Speaker's son.

That law says no relative of the President, Vice President, Senate President and Speaker of the House, shall be allowed to intervene, directly or indirectly, in any business transaction, contract or application with the government.

But Mikey conveniently ignored the second paragraph of that section, which reads: "Provided, that this section

shall not apply to any person who, prior to the assumption of office of any of the above officials to whom he is related, has been already dealing with the Government along the same line of business, (underscoring supplied) nor to any transaction, contract or application already existing or pending at the time of such assumption of public office, nor to any application filed by him the approval of which is not discretionary upon compliance with requisites provided by law, or rules or regulations issued pursuant to law, nor any act lawfully performed in an official capacity or in the exercise of a profession." (Whew! Why do lawyers and lawmakers make it very hard for laymen to under-

stand their language?—RT)

Joey de Venecia has been in the telecommunications or broadband business in 1995 when his father was not yet the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Let's be fair to Mike Arroyo. His departure for Hong Kong just coincided with the eve of the Senate hearing on the controversial NBN contract.

The vacation had been planned way before the Senate investigation.

From Hong Kong, Mike A will reportedly proceed to the Netherlands, then to Venice, and then to Zurich, and finally to Munich.

From Munich, he will fly back to Hong Kong.

BUSINESSMAN JOSE DE VENECIA III, the Speaker's son, has linked presidential son Jose Miguel Arroyo to the controversial \$329-million broadband deal with China.

I have been vindicated on my series of exposés on the alleged smuggling activities of two controversial siblings for which I have been persecuted no end by the powers-that-be.

Need I say more?

What happened or is happening to me is now happening to Philippine Star columnist Jarius Bondoc, who exposed the deal that was allegedly attended by bribes and was grossly overpriced.

When Bondoc could not be stopped on his write-ups

about the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, his talk show at IBC 13, a government-sequestered TV station, was cancelled.

That was what the powers-that-be did to me and my brothers Erwin and Raffy after my exposés.

Our public service show, *Isumbong mo!* (Tulfo Brothers), at RPN 9, another government-sequestered TV station, was cancelled without the management giving any reason.

After my brothers and I protested the cancellation in a press conference that we called, a flurry of criminal charges—some of them trumped up—was filed against us.

I have warned Bondoc to brace for more brickbats to

Nato, Afghan troops launch new anti-Taliban operation

KABUL—ABOUT 2,500 NATO AND Afghan troops launched a new operation on Wednesday to clear Taliban fighters from the country's opium-growing heartland in southern Helmand province, officials said.

The offensive targeting the al-Qaida-linked movement that ruled Afghanistan until 2001 coincided with a suicide attack in the same province and violence elsewhere that left at least 10 people dead.

Troops backed by air power kicked off the operation in the early morning in Helmand's Upper Gereshk Valley, an area that has seen weeks of fighting between Taliban and soldiers, including troops from Britain.

"It is an operation to clear out Taliban insurgents in that particular area and help to restore governance to that area," said Maj. Charles Anthony, a spokesperson for Nato's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Anthony, speaking at a news conference in Kabul, gave few details of the operation,

saying it was still in its early stages.

Large parts of Helmand are out of government control. The province also produces more than 50 percent of Afghanistan's illegal opium, with the drugs trade said to fund part of the insurgency.

ISAF and the separate US-led coalition force have several operations underway across Afghanistan in an effort to help the fragile government beat back the Taliban insurgency and establish its authority.

Meanwhile, a suicide bomber blew himself up near a police convoy in Helmand's Garmser district on Wednesday and wounded eight policemen in the latest in a string of such attacks over the past months, police said.

The Taliban pledged to intensify attacks, especially suicide blasts, during the holy month of Ramadan, which started last Thursday. The latest suicide bombing was the third in the past week.

Linked to the Taliban-led violence, a pro-government tribal elder was gunned down

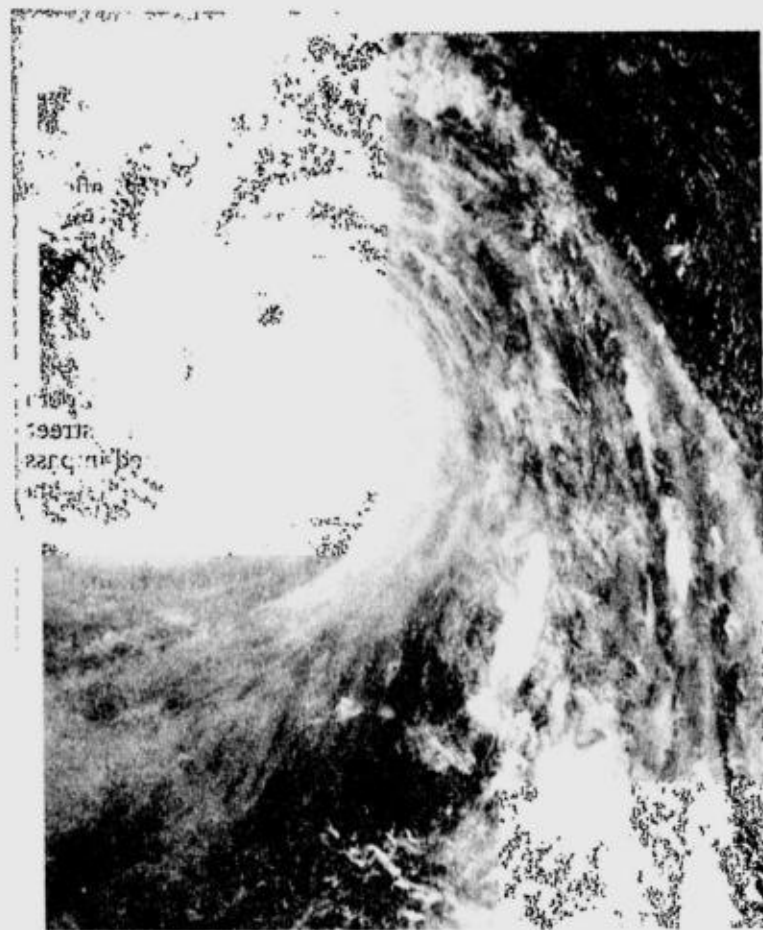
by militants overnight in Gereshk, the district where the Nato-led operation is taking place.

The outspoken elder, named Mira Jan, supported the government in the Taliban-dominated region and Taliban rebels were likely behind the killing, provincial police chief Mohammad Hussein Andial told AFP.

In a separate incident Taliban rebels killed three Afghan security guards providing security for a road construction company in the neighboring province of Zabul on Wednesday, local officials said.

Separately, an Afghan policeman and two Taliban fighters were killed after the rebels attacked a police convoy in the western province of Herat on Tuesday, a police commander said.

Afghan soldiers also killed three militants and wounded two others in a "clean-up" operation in the central province of Wardak on Tuesday, a defense ministry press statement said. **AFP**



IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

Typhoon Wipha approaches China and Taiwan in this Nasa satellite image on Sept. 18.

REUTERS

Top Khmer Rouge leader arrested

PAILIN, CAMBODIA—THE MURDEROUS Khmer Rouge regime's most senior surviving leader was arrested on Wednesday, plucked from his home in the Cambodian jungle to face justice at the country's long-delayed genocide trials.

Nuon Chea, now 82 and once the most trusted lieutenant of Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot, is the first of a small group of former top cadres living freely in Cambodia to be arrested by the new UN-backed tribunal.

An AFP correspondent saw police and court officials take him from his remote home and drive him to a waiting helicopter, which flew him to the capital Phnom Penh to be processed by the fledgling tribunal that will put him on trial.

"He was brought before the office of the co-investigating judges ... on execution of an arrest warrant," tribunal spokesperson Reach Sambath told AFP in Phnom Penh.

He said Nuon Chea would be informed of the charges being brought against him, but did not say what those would be.

Nuon Chea, known in the regime's revolutionary circles as "Brother Number

Two," was allegedly a key architect of the execution policies of the Khmer Rouge, who are blamed for the deaths of up to two million people.

But in an interview with AFP in July, he insisted he had no blood on his hands.

"I was not involved in the killing of people," he said. "I don't know who was responsible." Officials from the genocide court swept in at dawn to seize him.

"He was prepared for a long time for this. Everybody knew this day was coming," said Nuon Chea's son Nuon Say.

"We are not happy because he struggled for the nation, but at the end of his life he will be found guilty" for crimes committed by the regime, he added.

Nuon Say said authorities had confiscated documents, as well as some handwritten correspondence and photos of Nuon Chea and his wife.

Hundreds of villagers gathered in stunned silence as a convoy of nearly a dozen police and genocide court vehicles escorted him to the helicopter.

"He was shaking. His legs looked like they would collapse," neighbor Sok Sothara, who peered in through the window before he was led away, told AFP.



THIS photo taken on July 20, shows the most senior surviving Khmer Rouge leader, Nuon Chea.

AFP

Nuon Chea's rank in the communist hierarchy and alleged decision-making role would make him the most significant defendant to be tried for crimes committed under the 1975-79 regime by the tribunal, which was established last year.

The regime abolished religion, schools and currency, exiling millions to vast collective farms in a bid to create an agrarian utopia. Up to two million people died of starvation, disease, overwork or execution.

He had been living freely since surrendering to the government in late 1998.

AFP

Tug-of-war over Iraq policy intensifies in US Congress

WASHINGTON—THE TUG-OF-WAR over Iraq policy intensified in the US Congress on Tuesday, as Democrats renewed their efforts to step up troop withdrawals while an influential Republican senator offered a compromise.

A week after Iraq commander Gen. David Petraeus announced gradual troop reductions in Iraq through next summer, Senate Democrats seeking a faster pull-out pledged to hold a vote soon on a proposal they think is their best chance to influence the course of the war.

Sen. James Webb, a Virginia Democrat, is proposing that US troops should spend as much time at home as they did abroad on their previous tour of duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.

It is just one of several initiatives on Capitol Hill aimed at pressing President George W. Bush into changing his war strategy and Petraeus' report seems to have done nothing to discourage their proliferation.

Ohio's Republican Sen. George Voinovich, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, announced a possible compromise plan that would not set a deadline for the end of the Iraq mission, as many Democrats want, but it

would not leave it open-ended either.

The plan would enshrine the troop withdrawals already announced, but would also require the Bush administration to report to Congress with a timeline for further reductions.

"We're looking for a comprehensive plan. Right now it's too open ended (in Iraq)," said Voinovich, one of about a dozen Senate Republicans considered swing voters on Iraq policy who are being courted by both parties.

Gordon Johndroe, spokesperson for the White House National Security Council, said Voinovich's proposal was being reviewed.

"The proliferation of proposals suggests to me that there's a lot of interest in finding a new way forward in Iraq," said Sen. Susan Collins, a Maine Republican who has been seeking support for her own compromise plan to change the mission in Iraq, together with Democratic Sen. Ben Nelson of Nebraska.

Others were uncertain. "Is it going to build (support) or split and divide and reach no resolution?" asked Sen. Olympia Snowe, also of Maine and one of a few Republicans who has joined Democrats in votes to bring troops home. **Reuters**

O.J. Simpson faces seven felony offenses

LOS ANGELES—FORMER AMERICAN football legend O.J. Simpson was hit by a barrage of felony charges on Tuesday that could see him battling to avoid a life prison sentence, documents showed.

Simpson, who became a national hate figure in the US following his sensational acquittal for the brutal murder of his ex-wife and her friend in 1994, will appear in court on Wednesday for an arraignment hearing.

He is currently being held without bail after being deemed a flight risk.

Charges against Simpson, 60, and three other men were detailed in a criminal complaint filed by Nevada prosecutors in Clark County on Tuesday, following the fallen icon's arrest in connection with an alleged robbery last week.

Simpson and the men have been charged with seven felony offenses: conspiracy to commit kidnapping; conspiracy to commit robbery; first degree kidnapping with use of a deadly weapon; burglary with a deadly weapon; robbery with a deadly weapon; assault with a deadly weapon and coercion with a deadly weapon.

The four men have also been charged with the misdemeanor offense of conspiracy to commit a crime. If convicted on the most serious charges Simpson could be sentenced to life in prison.

The charges stem from an incident at the Palace Station casino on Thursday, when a gang of gun-toting men that included Simpson is reported to have stormed into a hotel room and snatched sporting memorabilia from two dealers.

Simpson is behind bars at the Clark County Detention Center in connection with the alleged robbery. In interviews with US media prior to his arrest he denied robbery, saying he was only recovering items that



SIMPSON

AFP

had been illegally stolen from him. He also denied that anyone in the group was armed.

On a tape that surfaced in US media reports on Monday, a man identified as Simpson could be heard angrily confronting the two sports memorabilia dealers.

"Think you can steal my (expletive) and sell it?" the man purported to be Simpson is heard to say after telling his associates: "Don't let nobody out of here!"

Several unidentified voices are heard barking aggressive, expletive-laden demands at the victims of the heist, Alfred Beardsley and Bruce Fromong.

Fromong said in interviews Simpson and his associates had stormed into his hotel room like soldiers on a military raid.

"The door burst open and they came in commando style, O.J. Simpson and some of his people, I guess you would call it, with guns drawn," Fromong said. "The thing in my mind as soon as I saw him, I'm thinking, 'O.J., how can you be this dumb?'" **AFP**

Fossils raise fresh questions over mankind's evolutionary saga

PARIS—THE 1.77-MILLION-YEAR-old remains of three adults and a teenager unearthed in the Caucasus point to a far greater variation in early humans than once suspected, according to a study released on Wednesday.

But the bones also reveal a species with a startling mix of primitive and advanced features that does not fit neatly into any evolutionary continuum, an ambiguity sure to spark debate among scientists.

The research team that made the discovery, led by David Lordkipanidze of the Georgian National Museum, reported their findings in the British journal Nature.

In many respects, the well-preserved fossils found near the Georgian town of

Dmanisi resemble *Homo erectus*—a species from the genus *Homo* that first appeared in Africa some two million years ago and quickly spread throughout Europe and much of Asia.

The Dmanisi specimens are the oldest *hominins*, a taxonomic term comprising humans and chimpanzees, to be found outside Africa.

They have remarkably human-like spines and lower limbs that would have been well suited for long distance travel. Their feet had well-developed arches.

An apparently small gap in the size of males and females also put them in the same company as *H. erectus* and *H. sapiens*.

At the same time, however, they share many traits with the earlier *Homo*

habilis—"skilful man," named for the tools he used—and even with the more primitive species in the genus *Australopithecus*, which first appeared in Africa some four million years ago.

Their brain-to-body mass ratio is on the low end of the scale, as is their body size, not much larger than a chimpanzee.

The largest adult in the group would have weighed 48-to-50 kilograms, and stood 147 to 161 centimeters tall.

And another key measure of separation from modern humans was their inability to pivot the forearm forward in relation to the body.

Discovered in the early 1990s, the Dmanisi site has proved a rich source of remains and artifacts from the dawn of the Pleistocene period. **AFP**

Thaksin to return, but it won't be soon

LONDON—OUSTED THAI PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra promised to return to Thailand to fight corruption charges, but said on Wednesday it would not be any time soon.

"I love my people, I love my family. I will definitely go back to Thailand, and I will find the right timing," Thaksin told British Broadcasting Corp. radio.

He ruled out a return until at least after tentative elections slated for December, saying he did not want to be the cause of violent confrontation in the country.

Following months of demonstrations accusing Thaksin of corruption and abuse of power, the country's military leaders staged a coup which ousted him in September.

Since then Thai authorities have issued arrest warrants against Thaksin and his wife—who have been living in self-imposed exile in London—for allegedly violating stock-trading laws and on corruption-related charges.

Thaksin denied the charges and vowed to clear his name, but could not name a date for his return.

"After elections. That's my initial ideas," he said. "We probably have to wait for the new government to be installed ... but I have to wait and see." **AP**



Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM,
Petitioner

SSC CASE NO. 7-16924-06

— versus —

IGNACIO LUIS L. JORDANA, GABRIEL NARFE C. MATA, NELSON A. GABATE, GENGHIS MIGUEL G. YLAYA, and RANDY C. ORODIO, as responsible officers of TRIO I.N.N. RATTAN CO./THANAJA EXPORT, INC.,
Respondents

x-----x

SUMMONS

TO: MR. RANDY C. ORODIO

GREETINGS:

You are hereby required to file within fifteen (15) days from the date of publication of this Summons with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, 12th Floor, SSS (Makati) Building, 6782 Ayala Avenue corner Herrera Street, Makati City, your Answer to the Petition filed by the Social Security System (SSS) for remittance of unpaid SS contributions and penalty imposed thereon for late payment.

You are further required to serve a copy of your Answer upon the petitioner's counsel, Atty. Marie Ann B. Chavez, SSS Cebu City Branch Office, Escario corner Gorordo Streets, Cebu City.

If you fail to answer within the time prescribed above, the Hearing Commissioner, may upon motion of the petitioner or *motu proprio*, declare you in default and shall forthwith proceed to receive the petitioner's evidence ex-parte and thereafter recommend to the Commission either the granting or denial of the amended petition as the evidence may warrant.

SO ORDERED.

Makati City, Philippines, August 15, 2007.

(PDI - September 20, 2007)

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Meteorite strikes Peru; 200 fall ill

Crater spews mysterious gases

LIMA—ABOUT 200 VILLAGERS HAVE FALLEN ill from mysterious gases that spewed from a crater after a meteorite crashed in southeastern Peru, but no radiation has been detected, officials and scientists said on Tuesday.

Scores of residents of the farming village of Carancas began vomiting and complaining of headaches and dizziness after the space object struck the area Saturday, creating an 8-meter deep, 20-meter wide crater.

Engineer Renan Ramirez of the Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute said a team of scientists found no radiation at the crash site and confirmed that the crater was not created by a fallen satellite.

"We have determined with precision instruments that there is no radiation," Ramirez told AFP.

Ramirez said the illnesses may have been triggered by sulfur, arsenic or other toxins that may have melted in the extreme heat produced by the meteorite strike.

"It is a conventional meteorite that, when it struck, produced gases by fusing with elements of the terrain," he said.

He also ruled out that the object was a satellite.

"If it had been the case (a satellite crash), the strike would have let out radiation and contaminated the area," he said.

Villagers now fear that the fumes may have exposed them to long-term health problems, while some are also concerned that more objects could fall from space. Local residents said they heard an explosion and felt the ground shake after the meteorite crashed.

Nestor Quispe, mayor of the nearby town of Desaguadero, said about 200 sick villagers are being treated and that Carancas residents fear their long-term side effects.



LOCAL police officers stand next to a crater apparently made by a meteorite on Sept. 16 in Puno, southern Peru.

AFP



FUKUDA

Front-runner for Japan PM admits charisma deficit

TOKYO—YASUO FUKUDA, THE FRONT-runner to be Japan's next prime minister, admitted on Wednesday he lacked charisma but said he would work to improve people's lives and relations with neighboring countries.

Fukuda, 71, looks set to beat former Foreign Minister Taro Aso in Sunday's presidential election of the ruling Liberal Democratic

Party to succeed Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Abe, who took over from the flamboyant and popular Junichiro Koizumi less than a year ago, announced last week that he was stepping down after a slew of money scandals embroiling cabinet ministers and sapping voter support.

"I don't think I will be able to demonstrate the kind of leadership Premier Koizumi

showed," Fukuda, clad in his usual grey suit, told a joint press conference with Aso.

But he noted that the ruling party, which was defeated in July elections, had lost support in part due to concern over a widening rich-poor divide since Koizumi initiated free-market reforms.

"I must carry out reforms that are directly linked to people's lives but I must not make

people worried in doing so," Fukuda said, warning against "an excessive form of economic rationalism." "It is wrong to believe all is fine if you entrust everything in the hands of economic people," he said.

Fukuda also vowed to strengthen ties with China and repeated he would not visit the Yasukuni war shrine, seen as a symbol of Tokyo's wartime militarism.

AFP

Saudi cleric denounces Bin Laden

RIYADH—A LEADING SAUDI CLERIC has publicly denounced Osama bin Laden, a rare move among clerics in his native Saudi Arabia who have avoided direct criticism of the al-Qaida leader.

Salman al-Awdah issued his "open letter to Osama bin Laden" on his website this week (www.islamtoday.net) and read it out on a show he presents on Saudi-owned pan-Arab channel MBC.

Western and Arab critics of Saudi Arabia's hardline religious establishment have often criticized senior clerics for failing to unequivocally distance themselves from the mastermind of 9/11 attacks that killed 3,000 people.

"Brother Osama, how much blood has been spilt? How many innocents among children, elderly, the weak and women have been killed and made homeless in the name of al-Qaida?" he said.

"The ruin of an entire people, as is happening in Afghanistan and Iraq, ... cannot make Muslims happy," he said, attacking al-Qaida's policy of revolt across the region.

"Who benefits from turning countries like Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon or Saudi Arabia into places where fear spreads and no one can feel safe?"

Al-Awdah said al-Qaida's actions had led Western governments to rein in Muslim charity work around the world and Arab governments to jail thousands.

The letter came just days after a new threatening message from Saudi-born Bin Laden—thought to be hiding in the frontier area between Pakistan and Afghanistan—to mark the sixth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks on US cities.

Bin Laden used to single out Al-Awdah as an independent cleric worthy of respect; but Al-Awdah—jailed in the 1990s for criticizing the US-allied Saudi royals over corruption and pro-Western foreign policy—has since toned down his rhetoric.

A Riyadh-based diplomat who follows Islamic affairs said this lessened the impact of Awdah's words.

One Saudi commentator said the letter was six years too late.

"Why now, Sheikh?" wrote Tareq al-Homayd in the pan-Arab Saudi daily Asharq al-Awsat on Monday. "He is distancing himself from Bin Laden at a time when those who do so have nothing to lose and no price to pay."

Awdah was one of 26 Saudi clerics who supported resistance to US forces in Iraq as "jihad," or holy war, during the US siege of Fallujah in November 2004. Reuters



SWEET PAINTED LADY

A painted lady butterfly lands on a Zinnia haageana (Old Mexico Zinnia) at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens on Tuesday, in Cheyenne, Wyo. The painted lady is the most widespread butterfly in the world.

AP

Iran attack talks worry Russia, China

MOSCOW—RUSSIA AND CHINA expressed alarm on Tuesday over comments by France's foreign minister raising the specter of war with Iran, and Washington said diplomacy was key to ending a standoff with Tehran over its nuclear program.

Minister Bernard Kouchner, his comments clearly touching the resilience of a coalition of major powers seeking to curb Iran's ambitions, sought to play down his weekend remarks, saying they had been meant as a warning against war.

"I do not want it to be said that I am a warmonger!" he told Le Monde newspaper, days before the five UN Security Council permanent members, including Russia and China, and Germany were due to meet to discuss possible new sanctions against Tehran.

"My message was a message of peace, of seriousness and of determination," the paper quoted Kouchner as saying on his plane as he headed to Moscow for talks with his Russian counterpart.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made it clear at a joint news briefing with Kouchner that his remarks had disturbed a Kremlin, like China, less inclined to sanctions than the West.

"We are worried by reports that there is serious consideration being given to military action in Iran," Lavrov said. "That is a threat to a region where there are already grave problems in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Washington, which itself has kept open the possibility of armed force if diplomacy fails, made

clear it had no interest in military embroilment at this stage. At the same time, it seemed at pains to dismiss suggestions of disunity among the powers.

"We believe that there is a diplomatic solution," White House spokesperson Dana Perino said. "We are working with the French and the rest of the EU (European Union) community in order to pressure Iran to comply with their obligations under the UN Security Council regulations."

Western powers led by the United States accuse Iran of using a purported nuclear power program as a screen for development of nuclear arms—something they fear could add enormously to instability in the already volatile Middle East. They point to Iran's past secrecy over nuclear research as cause for concern.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, an outspoken critic of the West, said Kouchner's comments were meant only for the media. "We do not consider these threats to be serious."

Iran says it seeks nuclear energy only for electricity and condemns UN sanctions promoted by the five permanent members—China, Russia, the United States, France and Britain—and Germany over its uranium enrichment program.

Lavrov, signaling Russian policy at a powers' meeting scheduled for Friday to consider new steps, said Iran should be left to work with the International Atomic Energy Agency before the world considers further sanctions or military action.

Reuters

Climate campaigners may get Nobel Peace Prize

OSLO—THE 2007 NOBEL PEACE Prize could go to a climate campaigner such as ex-US Vice President Al Gore or Inuit activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier, reinforcing a view that global warming is a threat to world security, experts say.

The winner of the \$1.5 million prize, perhaps the world's top accolade, will be announced in Oslo on Oct. 12 from a field of 181 candidates. The prize can be split up to three ways.

"There are reasonably good chances that the peace prize will be awarded to someone working to stop the dramatic climate problems the world is facing," said Boerge Brende, a former Norwegian environment minister.

He noted that the UN Security Council, the top forum for debating war and peace, held a first debate in April about how far climate changes such as droughts, heatwaves or rising seas will be a spur to conflicts.

"We have many good candidates for the prize, and we are approaching a decision," said Geir Lundestad, director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute where the five-member committee meets.

Kenya's Wangari Maathai won the 2004 peace prize for her campaign to plant 30 million trees across Africa, the first Nobel for an environmental campaigner. Lundestad declined to say whether fighting climate change could justify a peace prize.

Brende and another Norwegian

parliamentarian nominated Gore for his Oscar-winning movie about climate change "An Inconvenient Truth" and Watt-Cloutier, who has highlighted the plight of indigenous cultures facing a quickening Arctic thaw.

Arctic sea ice has shrunk to record lows this year. The head of the Nobel committee, Ole Danbolt Mjoes, has praised Gore's movie and lives in the Norwegian Arctic city of Tromsø.

Others suggested candidates include the UN Climate Panel and its leader, Rajendra Pachauri. The panel said this year that it was more than 90 percent likely that mankind's activities were the main cause of warming in the past 50 years.

Reuters



FORMER Vice President of the United States and author of the worldwide bestseller "An Inconvenient Truth," Al Gore.

AFP

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Choice of
bets divides
NGAP, ICTSI
/A24



San Beda takes Game 1

Menor ablaze as Red Lions rip Letran Knights apart

GAMES WEDNESDAY (Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m.—San Sebastian vs Letran (Jrs)
4 p.m.—San Beda vs Letran (Srs)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

A MAJOR ROLE FROM A guy named Menor.

Ogie Menor hit a fallaway and a short jumper in the last two minutes that proved to be the telling baskets as defending champion San Beda stopped Letran, 76-68, last night to move within a win of clinching the NCAA men's basketball championship at the Araneta Coliseum.

The stocky, mohawk-haired forward scored nine of his 23 points in the fourth quarter as the Red Lions finally stormed away from the hard-fighting Knights.

San Beda will seek its second straight championship on Wednesday also at the Big Dome.

"I was just doing what the coach instructed me to do," said the 20-year-old, 6-foot-3 Menor. "After all, the coach trusts me to do such things."

That included firing from the top of the key after get-

ting away from defender Carlo Reposar.

"Lumayo yung big man, so I said I might as well take it," said Menor of the triple that made it 58-53 for San Beda with eight minutes left.

The Red Lions finally took control after his back-to-back jumpers in heavy traffic gave them a 70-60 bubble with 2:01 left.

"It wasn't easy. We struggled defensively because of Letran's sticky defense," said San Beda coach Frankie Lim. "But I was happy with my boys, they played with a lot of heart and with a big desire to win."

Recent history favors the Red Lions as the last five teams which won Game 1 eventually nailed the championship.

Mental lapse

Ironically, the Knights were the only team to break that trend, yielding the first game of the title series before beating Philippine Christian University for the 2005 crown.

Letran coach Louie Alas blamed "mental lapse" in the final four minutes when Menor went on a scoring rampage.

"I think we were able to minimize their deep bench," said Alas, noting the unusual eight-man rotation employed by the Red Lions. "I was able to use 11 men tonight. I think we need to play a good 40 minutes instead of a good 36 minutes like what we did tonight."

With RJ Jazul hitting from the outside and the rest gamely challenging enemy attempts, the Knights stormed to a 23-14 lead in the first quarter before the Red Lions fought back and pulled ahead, 30-23.

Earlier, MVP top contender Ryan Buenafe scored his fourth triple double of the

SAN BEDA / A25

MOHAWK-haired and all, Ogie Menor of San Beda challenges a double team by Letran's Reymer Gutilban and an unidentified teammate in Game 1 of their championship bout yesterday. Menor provided the crucial baskets as the Red Lions drew first blood in the best-of-three series for the NCAA crown. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

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MORE THAN JUST A CARD

Choice of bets divides NGAP, ICTSI

By Musong R. Castillo

THE NATIONAL GOLF ASSOCIATION OF the Philippines and benefactor ICTSI had a falling out yesterday over the selection of players to the Nomura Cup scheduled early next month in Taipei.

ICTSI has threatened to pull out four of its players who made the 6-man national pool after a grueling 144-hole qualifier at The Riviera last month after the NGAP selected rookie Jonel Ababa over Jay Bayron for the Nomura Cup.

Aside from Bayron, Anthony Fernando, Ferdinand Aunzo and Michael Bibat also belong to the ICTSI pool.

They all made it to the RP team together with Ababa and Mark Fernando, products of the National Caddies' Open program.

According to NGAP director Caloy Coscoluella, the idea of sending Ababa over Bayron did not sit well with ICTSI, which has bankrolled the training of some of the country's finest amateurs since the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

But Coscoluella, and the rest of the NGAP for that matter, had decided on sending the four—Ababa, Anthony and Mark Fernando and Aunzo—to give them international exposure in a topnotch tournament where the country has a very slim chance of winning.

"We are investing for the future; this is a move that will serve Philippine golf better in the long term," Coscoluella told the INQUIRER over the phone. "It's a pity that this (threat of withdrawal) has to happen at this time."

"But the NGAP will stand by what it believes because we are looking ahead of the Putra Cup."

Mark Fernando and Aunzo tied for first after the qualifying, with Bayron finishing third followed by Anthony Fernando, Ababa and Bibat.

Coscoluella said that ICTSI official Nestor Mendoza is invoking that the top four players be sent to Taipei, where the competition is tough with crack players from Australia, New Zealand and Japan boosting the field.

"But that was never the rule, we (NGAP) never even thought of that idea—of having the top four play in the Nomura Cup," Coscoluella said. "The idea was to get six players into the pool and nothing else. It is from that pool where we will choose our players."

The strategy, according to Coscoluella, is to have the four play in Taipei with the top two Filipinos there to join Bayron and Bibat in the Putra Cup—a tournament where the Philippines has a realistic shot and is scheduled early November at the Country Club in Laguna.

"Let's face it, our chances of winning the Nomura Cup are very slim," Coscoluella said. "Giving the boys the experience there would make them better players for the Putra Cup, hence, better chances for the country."

"I don't see why they can't see that logic."

The Philippines will also see action in the Thailand Southeast Asian Games in December where it is the defending champion.



JONEL Ababa's inclusion to the Nomura Cup team in lieu of Jay Bayron (inset) stirs a hornet's nest.

PDI PHOTO

SPORTSWATCH

Arnis headlines world martial arts festival

ARNIS, THE COUNTRY'S NATIVE MARTIAL ART, will be showcased along with 30 others at the 10th World Martial Arts Festival in Chungju, South Korea on Sept. 28 to Oct. 4.

Practitioners from better-known arts such as karate, muay thai, and taekwondo, as well as more obscure styles like sambo, viet vo dao, and hapkido will converge in the annual festival to display their skills.

Arnis Philippines, Inc. will send a seven-member delegation to Korea, headed by Richardson C. Gialogo to demonstrate the martial art.

The members of the exhibition team are Master Jaime Quizana, Ryan Gialogo, Marie Kristine Crespo, Mikhail de Dios, Raymond de Vera, and Raymond Anthony Suba, all multi-awarded arnis athletes.

It will be the fourth straight year that Arnis Philippines will send representatives to the world event.

RP rowers bag Thailand Long Boat Race

THE PHILIPPINE MEN'S DRAGON Boat team beat 15 other nations in the recent International and Thailand Long Boat Race.

The Filipinos bested the Thais in the finals (650-meter race), winning two out of three races.

For this year's championships, the 82-member delegation was composed of the men's National Dragon Boat team, Mixed Crew team and select athletes from various affiliate clubs of the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation (PDBF).

It was the biggest delegation by the Filipinos since its first staging in Hong Kong in 1997.

Teams from the United States, Singapore, Hong Kong, Cambodia and Macau, among others, also competed.

Up next for the Philippine team, which also won in Macau and China last June, is the 8th IDBF World Dragon Boat Racing Championships set Sept. 19-23 at the Sydney International Regatta Course.

The Philippine team bagged a silver in the China edition in 2004 and a bronze in Berlin the following year.

PBL sets Rookie Draft deadline

PLAYERS WHO WISH TO JOIN THE PBL Rookie Draft will have until Sept. 24 to file their application forms. Interested players are advised to submit their forms at the PBL office located at Unit 2302-A, West Tower, Philippine Stock Exchange Centre in Pasig City. Unlike the previous seasons, the country's premier amateur basketball league will conduct its rookie draft only once starting this year. The Rookie Draft is set on Sept. 28, while the Rookie Camp will be on Sept. 26. For more details, contact Lanie Sagayap-Hallili (Monday to Friday) at 6673008.

Splash golf tees off

SPLASH FOUNDATION, INC., THE SOCIAL development arm of the Splash Group will hold its 5th Splash Cup Open Golf Tournament tomorrow at the West Course of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City. The event tees off shotgun-style starting at 7 a.m. The tournament hopes to raise funds to contribute to the livelihood, scholarship, educational and hospitalization assistance programs of the foundation. A Toyota Vios is listed as a hole-in-one prize while trophies and a lot more prizes await the other winners. For inquiries, call 2927806, 4329197 and look for Liza or Grace.

4-stag derby today

THE SEQUEL TO THE ANNUAL LPC 7-stag derby kicks off today with a 4-stag event headlined at the Las Piñas Coliseum. More than 75 fights are scheduled in the event hosted by coliseum manager Alex Tobiasan, Mayor Nene Aguilar and Rudy Soyaban. Action starts at 5 p.m. For inquiries, please call 8731040 and 8725456.



BY TOP CHOICE

- Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Touchmenot (3), Aramis (6), Super Elegant (5), Madam Composite/Queen (2)
 Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—District Three (8), Royal Lady Jane (4), Regent Skipper (8), Touch Me Not (5)
 Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Vivere (1), Afternoon Delight/Ocean Deep (6), Tellmenolies (7), Maglev (5)
 Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Out of Sight (2), On the Fairway (4), Princess of Aachen (6), Elegancia/River of Silver (5)
 Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Quant Je puis (5), Danehill Dave (1), Jigsaw Star (7), Lord Eugene (3)
 Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—When We're Flying (1), Litup-withdiamonds (3), Complexion (6), Flame of the Wind (5)
 Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Baling Ganda (2), Fiery Bull (5), Manila's Smile (6), Devil Rising (2), Fire Lady (6)
 Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Batong Silvar (9), Kai Jason (8), Lucky Joe (6), Sound of Silence (7), Luck of the Irish (11), Pay to See (1)

Batawang's fight postponed anew

By Reach Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—BERT BATAWANG yesterday received the jolting information that his scheduled Oct. 4 world title fight against Mexican IBF light flyweight champion Ulises Solis has been called off again a day after he was declared perfectly ready for the championship.

The second postponement of the title bout originally slated last Sept. 16 in Las Vegas was harder to take for the 35-year-old Batawang who on Tuesday got hard-earned approval after a guided eight-round tour of the cruel route he had expected to take against Solis.

Rodel Mayol simulated the moves of the Mexican champion during a nonsense sparring at the Wild Card

gym and readily confirmed the shattering impact of Batawang's left punch.

Mayol, who lost to Solis in a title match in Chicago last month, claimed that, other than spear punches which he usually slammed, Batawang also displayed sharper defensive moves.

Trainer Nonoy Neri, who has been repackaging Mayol under the patronage of Manny Pacquiao, said

Batawang could have not been more set for the championship fight against Solis.



BATAWANG: Powerful

"Malakas talaga, sobra ang stamina (He's really powerful and he has terrific stamina)," Neri said.

International matchmaker Sampson Lewkowicz yesterday informed Batawang's manager Sammy Gello-ani in Cebu that doctors have ordered Solis to refrain from training for at least two weeks due to a shoulder injury.

Gello-ani said he would petition the International Boxing Federation (IBF), which lists Batawang as mandatory challenger, to put his fighter in an in-

terim title fight with the winner next facing Solis.

Lewkowicz however claimed they would reschedule the twice postponed title fight in November, although there was no assurance Solis would not claim injury again.

Batawang had been lined up to fight Gerson Guerrero in a title eliminator as member of the RP team in the Boxing World Cup in Sacramento last month, but his opponent was discovered with a torn retina two days before the bout.

Batawang, who said there had also been an original title eliminator against Francisco Rosas last May, continued to say he would just wait for instructions from his manager, whom he earlier extolled for having finally lined him up for the Oct. 4 championship.

11th Sletba Open rolls off Sept. 22

THE 11TH STA. LUCIA EAST TENPIN BOWLING ASSOCIATION (Sletba) Open Championships rolls off Sept. 22 at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall Bowling Center in Cainta, Rizal.

Cash prizes worth more than P250,000 await the winners in the various categories, including Mixed Open Masters, Graded Masters (men), Associate Masters (men), Mixed Ladies Masters and Senior Masters.

There will also be cash prizes for winners in the team, doubles, singles and all events categories. All winners will also receive trophies.

The tournament is open to all bowlers who are members in good standing of any association affiliated with the Philippine Bowling Congress (PBC).

The latest PBC average for local bowlers shall apply for purposes of classification.

The opening ceremonies will start at 11 a.m. Qualifying games will immediately follow and will be held every day until Thursday, Sept. 27, from 12 noon up to 9 p.m.

The finals will start on Friday, Sept. 28, with the Senior Masters division, and will end on Sunday, Sept. 30, with the Mixed Open Masters event.

Guevarra-Lim ousts Alcano-Lumpay

THE PAIR OF BENJIE GUEVARRA and Eduardo Lim ousted double world champion Ronato Alcano and partner Alex Lumpay yesterday at the start of first SMC Scotch Doubles 10-balls at the Elbowroom in

Metrowalk, Pasig City.

Guevarra and Lim scored a 9-5 victory over the favored tandem in the race-to-9, single knockout system tournament that will award P140,000 to the winning pair.



CHAMPS: National player Denise Dy and doubles partner Nungnadda Wannasuk of Thailand receive their runner-up trophies in the recent \$10,000 Khon-Kaen Women's Circuit Leg 1 in Bangkok, Thailand. Dy, supported by Philippine Airlines, and Wannasuk lost in the finals to Thais Mulsap and Wongteanchai, 6-4, 6-2.

"Dikitan 'yung laban sa una at sa bandang huli lamang kami nakalamang (It was a close fight and we were able to break away towards the end only)," said Guevarra, who will banner the country's snooker team in the 2007 Thailand Southeast Asian Games in December.

Guevarra and Lim will next battle Roberto Dy and Jech Jech Limen, who beat Joven Bustamante and Roberto Chung, 9-6.

In another match, Alex Pagulayan and Jason Aperin crushed the pair of 2007 SMB RP 9-ball Open champion Antonio Gabica and Rogelio Sotero Jr., 9-2, to set up a second round clash with the winner of the match between the Mike Takayama-Edwin Reyes and Jomar de Ocampo-Jess Dacoro.

Also advancing to the second round were the pairs of Ramil Gallego and Julie Guevarra, Gandy Valle and Jay Jay Millares, Warren Kiamco and Rodrigo Geronimo, and Godofredo Ducanes and Ernesto Sarmiento.

Gallego and Guevarra nipped Dennis Orcollo and Troy Danao, 9-8; Valle and Millares bested Ricky Zerna and Jun Talosig, 9-6, while Kiamco and Geronimo beat Antonio Lining and Art Palma, 9-6. Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Four foreign teams join NBC invitational tourney

TEAMS FROM TAIWAN, INDONESIA, Malaysia and Vietnam will see action in the second National Basketball Conference (NBC) international invitational tournament set here on Nov. 23-28.

NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla bared that a qualifying tournament among local teams will be held on Nov. 7-20 to determine the top four teams

that will join the visiting squads in the invitational cagefest.

"With the success of last year's first invitational event, we decided to make it a regular part of our program," said Padilla.

Quezon-Villa Anita won last year's invitational tourney by beating Indonesia's Panasia cagers.

Among the local teams that will com-

pete in the qualifying tourney are newly crowned NBC tidist Firefly-Iligan, Ozamiz Cotra, Naga, Montana, Pawnshop-Davao, MP Pacman-Gensan, Toyota-Iloilo Warriors, Baguio Centennial, Cebu, Laguna, Cavite-Tagaytay and Malabon-Spring Cooking Oil.

Three more teams from Manila, Bacolod and Zamboanga City have expressed their desire to join next year's

first NBC tourney.

According to NBC executive vice president and Tagaytay Mayor Bambol Tolentino, secretary general Tito Palma has started talking to prospective new teams and the returning ones.

"We'll have a bigger, better season starting in February 2008," said Tolentino. "There will be two events—the regional cup and the national cup."

Aces, Express pull through in PBA preseason

By Musong Castillo

DEFENDING PBA PRESEASON CHAMPION Alaska notched its first win in two games after holding off Coca Cola, 95-89, last night.

Tony dela Cruz, who returned to active duty after serving the Philippine team, scored 18 points with reigning Most Valuable Player Willie Miller adding 12 for the Aces. Three others tossed in 10 each to lead the Aces.

Alaska was in control throughout ending

the half with a 48-35 lead.

Rookie Ronjay Buenafe and veteran Mark Telan led the Tigers with 16 each.

Air21 also broke through with a 112-100 demolition of luckless Welcoat after getting 27 points from Arwind Santos and a combined 31 from rookies Doug Kramer and JC Intal.

The Dragons, who won only seven games in their maiden season last year, were led by Joe Devance's 31 and JR Reyes' 29.

It was the third straight loss for Welcoat, which is still awaiting the arrival of

Nic Belasco from the US.

The Scores

First Game

AIR21 112—Santos 27, Canaleta 18, Kramer 17, Intal 14, De Ocampo 11, Arboleda 9, Dimaunahan 7, Sotto 4, Chla 3, Cruz 2.

WELCOAT 100—Devance 31, Reyes 29, Arana 12, Gellg 8, Mente 6, Wainwright 4, Santamaria 4, Lopez 4, Guiyad 2, Baguilon 0.

Quarters: 28-18; 56-42; 84-76; 112-100.

Second Game

ALASKA 95—Dela Cruz 18, Miller 12, Quiñahan 10.

Thoss 10, Ferriols 10, Aban 9, Huganatan 8, Luanzon 5, Laure 4, Bono 4, Catus 3, Gonzales 2.

COCA COLA 89—Buenafe 16, Telan 16, Isip 14, Duremdes 12, Peek 8, Cabagnot 6, Calimag 5, Tolomia 5, Echavez 3, Misolas 2, Enrile 2.

Quarters: 26-19; 48-35; 71-62; 95-89.

Solar to cover PBA opening

LOOKS LIKE Solar Television is the very first outfit to express intention to bid for the 2008-2009 PBA broadcast coverage. The contract of current coveror ABC-5 expires at the end of the 2007-2008 season.

IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

From what I gathered, Solar has touched base not only with officials of the professional basketball league but with ABC-5's Tonyboy Cojuangco as well.

An unimpeachable source disclosed that there was a one-on-one meeting between Solar owner William Tieng and Tonyboy.

What could the early meeting be all about? Is there a possibility that the takeover could happen earlier? Or is Solar interested in purchasing the network, which is reportedly for sale?

I doubt very much if the meeting was about the PBA's opening day extravaganza which will be covered by Solar—for your information—and not ABC-5, although for sure it will be among the items on the agenda when the PBA board convenes in Macau this month.

I can't help wonder why Solar and not ABC-5 will be covering the opening day activities for television.

In addition to the opening day rites, other important topics expected to be discussed in Macau are the candidates for a permanent commissioner, the television coverage and the league format.

I was told that there is a proposal to revert to the three-conference format which may be a smart move, considering that PBA fans, as a rule, don't want to spend their money on elimination games.

What should be studied carefully is the PBA's commitment to make its players available for important international tournaments.

Unexpectedly, Allan Caidic's autobiographical book "My Life: The Triggerman" has turned out to be a best-seller.

Publisher Deo Alvarez of Atlas Publishing was himself very surprised since books on local sports and sports personalities hardly ever sell.

The figures posted by "The Triggerman" were way above those of the book on world boxing icon Manny Pacquiao.

Deo believes the secret is in one portion of Allan's book where he shares with his readers the secrets behind his deadly three-point shooting.

Retired PBA cager Abe King, now based in Washington, is flying to Manila next month to invite legends like Alvin Patrimonio, Samboy Lim, Jerry Codinera, Jojo Lastimoso, Vergel Meneses, Manny Victorino, and Dindo Pumaren to play exhibition games against their US-based players in February.

Abe is chair of PBA Legends USA Foundation, whose objective is to help retired cagers in need of financial assistance.

The February event is a fund-raising affair, and will include a medical and dental mission where Filipino doctors and dentists are expected to participate.

The US-based team include Yves Dignadice, Ricky Brown, Marte Saldana, Onchie dela Cruz, Yoyoy Villamin, Jun Jabbar and Django Rivera. A beneficiary of the foundation is Rudy Distrito who is serving a jail sentence in a Nevada prison.

Blue Eagles: It's time to move on

Ateneo preparing for UST playoff

GAME SUNDAY (Arana Coliseum)
3 p.m.—Ateneo vs UST

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT HAD BEEN OVER AN HOUR SINCE the final buzzer sounded. Yet none of them seemed ready to trudge out of the locker room.

The Ateneo Blue Eagles, anyway, had plenty to mull about.

Coach Norman Black readily wore his team's shortcomings on his sleeves after the Eagles twice bungled the chance to claim the No. 2 slot in the UAAP basketball semifinals.

But Black no longer rued the two missed opportunities against the also-ran National U Bulldogs and arch rival La Salle Green Archers.

"We don't have a choice," said Black yesterday.

"We have to shake it off and move on. We can't dwell on the past. We

have to live for the moment. We lost to NU in overtime; we lost to La Salle by one point. Those two losses are over. And the moment is to focus on our next game against UST."

The Eagles, who ended up third, must conquer the fourth-ranked Tigers, who brought them a lot of heartaches in the Finals last season.

The Eagles and the defending champion Tigers clash in a knockout match this Sunday, with the winner advancing opposite La Salle in the stepladder semifinals.

"The most important thing is we still have a chance," said Black. "I still believe in my team, I still believe in my players. We have three days to adjust."

Black and his Eagles took a one-day break yesterday after back-to-back disappointments in the last four days.

San Beda takes Game 1

From page A23

season as two-time defending champion San Sebastian routed Letran, 90-72, to move within a win of the junior title.

The 6-foot-3 San Sebastian hot-shot topscored with 28 points, hauled 15 rebounds, issued 10 assists and even had two steals to power the Staglets, who led by 17 at halftime, 51-34.

The scores:

FIRST GAME (Jrs)

SAN SEBASTIAN 90—Buenafe 28, Bringas 21, Cusi 12, Je Delgado 12, Ortoste 5, Jo Delgado 4, Cam 3, F Delgado 2, Andrada 2, Laconico 1, Ramsey 0, Estrada 0, Bautista 0, Santos 0, Mamaril 0.

LETTRAN 72—San Jose 18, Ke Alas 16, Noble 14, Kr Alas 14, Khobuntin 8, Reforsado 2, Roxas 0, Romeo 0, Munsayac 0.

Quarters: 32-20, 51-34, 67-55, 90-72

SECOND GAME (srs)

SAN BEDA 76—Menor 23, Escobar 17, Ekwa 14, Aljamal 12, Hermida 4, Taganas 4, Lanete 2, Gamalinda 0.

LETTRAN 68—Jazul 17, Guevarra 11, Faundo 9, Quinday 7, Gutliban 7, Daa 6, Reposar 6, Del Rosario 3, Dangcal 2, Melegrito 0, Cabonca 0.

Quarters: 14-23, 35-34, 48-47, 76-68

Obosan leaves Carrera behind

VETERAN CAMPAIGNER ERICKSON Obosa outprinted Sherwin Carrera in a duel of former national team mainstays to rule the Open Pro Division of the Hitachi National Criterium Grand Prix in front of a banner crowd last weekend in Tarlac City.

The pride of Manaoag, Pangasinan beat Carrera to the finish line at the McDonald's Restaurant on Ninoy Aquino Boulevard to the cheers of the gallery that included Mayor Genaro "Aro" Mendoza and Arnold Rodriguez, Tarlac City Sports Council chief.



Alex Billan (center) leads the parade of winners during the awarding ceremony of the race whose premier division was ruled by Erickson Obosan.

Carrera settled for runner-up honors while Jeffrey Caratativo placed third in the circuit races sponsored by Hitachi, Smart Buddy and RM Morales plaques, trophies and medals.

Elmer Atilano bagged the Elite Non-Pro crown with Rodel Cabatbat and Kilven Mendoza placing second and third, respectively, in the bikefest sanctioned by the

Philippine Cycling Federation.

Businessman Alex Billan also came away a big winner by capturing two divisions—the Executive Open and the Masters category.

Billan kept his pursuers at bay with a well-paced run to top the Executive open, relegating Rodel Orzame and Julius Mornos to settle for second and third spots, respectively.

Nat'l dancers claim silvers

NATIONAL DANCESPORT ATHLETES Brian and Karla Ocanas primed up for their Thailand Southeast Asian Games stint in December as they copped the silver medal in the 11th Hong Kong Open International Dancesport Championship at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium in Hong Kong last week.

The brother-sister tandem, the undefeated youth standard champions and former 10-dance champions, bested around 22 pairs to reach the final in the Asia Open Grade A (modern category) although they fell short of their gold medal bid to a Chinese pair.

The Ocanas, scholars of creative dancesports academy, also placed sixth in the International Open Professional category of the annual event.

But the silver medal finish in the Asia Open Grade A augured well for the Ocanas, who will spearhead the country's gold medal bid in the sport in the 24th SEA Games slated Dec. 6-16 in Nakhon, Ratchasima in Thailand.

"I think our chances in the SEA Games are quite good," said the 19-year-old Brian from St. Benilde, whose partnership with Karla began in 2000. "But we have to continue our training."

That means non-stop practice, according to Karla, 21, and exposure to various international competitions, including the Macau Indoor Games slated in Macau next month.

The talented siblings, who debuted in top-level competition with a bronze medal finish in 2001 in Subic, also saw action in the Hong Kong Cup last July where they reached the quarterfinal round.



F1 DREAMERS: (from left) Edward Marcelo, Rainier Buchmann, SMC Ramon Ang and Motorsports director Boy Ochoa.

RP's first F1 racing track to rise soon

A FORMULA ONE RACE IN THE PHILIPPINES?

That may not be much of a stretch anymore as plans are afoot to construct a world standard F1 racing circuit in Angeles.

This was revealed in a plan hatched by Marcelo Group of Companies chair Eddie Marcelo and Buchmann, the Managing Director of world renown Hermann Tilke Architectural and Engineering Ltd. and a long-time friend of his late son Jovy Marcelo in the Indianapolis 500 championship.

Buchmann was here to meet with San Miguel Corporation president Ramon Ang and Motorsports Director Boy Ochoa to survey the 2,000-hectare proposed site in Angeles fronting the NLEX from Angeles to Subic.

Ang and his group of investors will be financing the said project.

Herman Tilke Architectural and Engineering Ltd. is the builder of most of the new F1 Circuits such as the Sepang F1 Circuit in

Malaysia, the Bahrain F1 International Circuit, the Shanghai F1 International Circuit in China, the Fuji F1 International Speedway in Japan, the Nurburgring Ring Circuit and the Hockenheimring Circuit in Germany.

"Ramon Ang, a long-time supporter of Philippine Motorsports has collaborated with a group of investors for the proposed world-class F1 circuit here in the Philippines and Herman Tilke is very much interested in the said project," said Marcelo.

SPORTS

Pacquiao hires marathoner as running partner

CEBU CITY—FILIPINO BOXING SUPERSTAR Manny Pacquiao has tapped Cebu's top long-distance runner Adonis Singson to keep him company in his morning runs which kick off his daily training grind.

Getting a new running partner became necessary since the two Mexican sparmates and even his brother Bobby Pacquiao could not keep pace with the

'Pacman' when he jogs at the Alta Vista hills here.

Pacquiao covered 10 kilometers in 40 minutes on a route capped by a 3-km uphill climb in the hills of Pardo here.

"It's a good run," American trainer Freddie Roach said, adding that "he's pretty close to his form when he was training for his third fight with (Erik)

Morales at this point."

Roach added that he liked the idea of tapping Singson to run with Pacquiao, noting that only a professional runner can keep up with his prized fighter, who is deep in training for his Oct. 6 rematch with Mexican great Marco Antonio Barrera in Las Vegas.

In the afternoon, Pacquiao hit the mitts for 12 rounds with Roach at the

Rex 'Wakee' Salud gym

Meanwhile, Pacquiao was saddened upon learning of the death of his former trainer Leonardo Pablo last Sunday in Manila due to heart failure.

Pacquiao sent P100,000 to Pablo's family through businessman and boxing promoter Jay San Pedro.

Narvaez, a veteran matchmaker, brought Pablo to the Mandaluyong

Hospital last Sunday.

He initially recovered from breathing problems but succumbed to another attack.

"He would have turned 68 today. It's his birthday today," Narvaez said in between sobs.

Pablo is set to be interred on Saturday at Manila's North Cemetery. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

Torre spearheads explosive RP start

By Roy Luarca

MANDAUE CITY—THE FILIPINOS made a strong start in the Asian Individual Chess Championships last night with Grandmasters Eugene Torre, Rogelio "Joey" Antonio and Mark Paragua hurdling their rivals at the Cebu International Convention Center here.

Torre triggered the onslaught by whipping Iranian Fide Master Homayoon Toufighi in 26 moves of a Queen's Gambit-Declined and Paragua followed suit with a 43-move triumph over Jordanian FM Ahmad Samhouri.

Not to be outdone, Antonio persevered with the black pieces to beat Singaporean FM Weiming Goh in 51 moves of a King's Indian Defense.

"It was a nice, simple win," said Torre, who held positional advantage early on and controlled the c-file when Toufighi resigned.

Paragua, who took a break from his United States campaign to join this tough \$40,000 tournament, gained tempo and never let up on his attack to force Samhouri's resignation.

"He (Samhouri) blundered with



PARAGUA



ANTONIO

his d6 move as it later allowed me to control the center," said Paragua, who was two pawns up in the end.

"I am hoping for a strong showing here to boost my rating," said Paragua, the first Filipino to breach the 2600 barrier last year but is now down to 2525.

Though he was a pawn down early on, Antonio was able to put pressure on the queenside and eventually forced Goh to give up two pawns.

Antonio was able to take another pawn and won though he and Goh have bishops of opposite colors.

Turin Olympian IM Darwin Laylo, returning after serving a six-month suspension slapped on him by the National Chess Federation of

the Philippines for alleged game-fixing, also won at the expense of countryman Rhobel Legaspi.

"I hope to make good in my comeback," said the 27-year-old Daylo, assistant coach of the UST women's chess team.

Cebuano Steven Yap Kin created a stir when he stunned Bangladeshi IM Enamul Hossain and joined the early leaders.

Teen sensation IM Wesley So was held to a draw by Indian Babu Lalith in a rook and pawn ending.

Bad luck fell on IM Ronald Bancod and National Masters Emmanuel Senador and Mirabeau Maga.

Bancod yielded to China's Chao Li, Senador bowed to Indian GM Parimarjan Negi and Maga surrendered to Chinese GM Shaoteng Yu.

The games between top seed GM Ni Hua of China and IM Morteza Mahjoobzardast and second seed Zhang Penxiang of China and compatriot IM Wen Yang were going on at presstime.

Meanwhile, NCFP president Prospero Pichay bared that Cebu will be making a bid to host the 2012 Chess Olympiad with the CICC as proposed venue.

IMMORTALIZED

Sculptor Laury Dizengremel (right) foreground puts the finishing touches on a terracotta warrior sculpture of World No. 1 tennis player Roger Federer in Shanghai, China. Eight sculptures of the top eight players playing in the season-ending ATP Tennis Masters tournament in Shanghai, beginning Nov. 11, will be erected. AP



Hingis ousts China's Sun, eyes Beijing Games stint

BEIJING—MARTINA HINGIS ADVANCED to the second round of the China Open on Tuesday, beating Sun Tiantian of China, 6-2, 6-3.

Hingis dropped her opening service game but broke back immediately to take control of the match, dropping serve only one more time.

"She started very well and hit some good return points," Hingis said. "I was not ready in the first game but later when I broke hers, my confidence came back."

The former top-ranked player will next face Peng Shuai, who beat Chinese qualifier Xu Yi-Fan 6-1, 6-4.

"In my next match, I definitely will get ready from the first point, not from the first game," Hingis said.

The fifth-seeded Hingis, a five-time Grand Slam champion, returned to tennis last year after about three years off because

of an ankle injury. She was playing in China for the first time.

"I'm looking forward to next year's Olympic Games. That's why I decided to come here and have a look at the city," Hingis said.

90th-ranked teen upsets Bartoli

In Calcutta, India, American teen Vania King upset top-seeded Marion Bartoli of France, 6-1, 7-5, in the first round of the WTA Tour's Sunfeast Open.

The 90th-ranked King, 18, faced only one break point in the one-hour-38-minute match. The 12th-ranked Bartoli won only 58 percent of the points on her first serve and 33 percent on her second, while King won 70 percent on both her first and second serve.

Alla Kudryavtseva and Yaroslava Shvedova also lost in the first round. AP

Madison Garden retires historic boxing ring

CANASTOTA, NEW YORK—IT is 32 square meters (342 square feet) of the most historic real estate in boxing, a place where some of the sport's greatest champions have stood—and where some were laid flat on their backs.

After 82 years, New York City's Madison Square Garden will retire its storied boxing ring and donate it to the International Boxing Hall of Fame, where it will go on display this fall.

"The fans. The atmosphere. The Garden was special....Some of my most exciting fights were in that ring, and I always got the job done there," said Joe Frazier, who had a 9-1 record in "The Mecca of Boxing," including a 15-round decision over Muham-

mad Ali on March 8, 1971 in what became known as "The Fight of the Century."

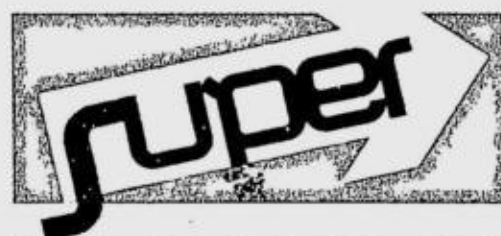
The Frazier-Ali bout was one of more than two dozen heavyweight championships fought in Madison Square Garden over its long history, along with thousands of other matches.

On Wednesday, MSG officials will stage a special "retirement party" for the ring. Frazier, past and present champions and boxing dignitaries will attend.

"This was obviously not an easy decision for us, but we felt the time was right," said Joel Fisher, senior vice president of MSG Sports Properties. "The ring is 82 years old and it was starting to show its age." AP

Anib holds golf tournament

IN AN EFFORT TO help raise funds for the employees' union of the National Food Authority, the Alyansa ng Industriyang Bigas, Inc. (Anib) is holding "Swing for a Cause," an inaugural golf tournament on Sept. 21 at the Veterans Golf Club, North Avenue, Quezon City. Tee off time is between 7-10 a.m. According to Anib president Robert Hernandez, proceeds of the tournament will be donated to the NFA Employees Association (NFAEA) to help finance their feeding program and rice donation to depressed barangays in Metro Manila. "This is the first fund-raising activity of the alliance and, hopefully, we can raise enough funds so we can achieve our goal," Hernandez said.



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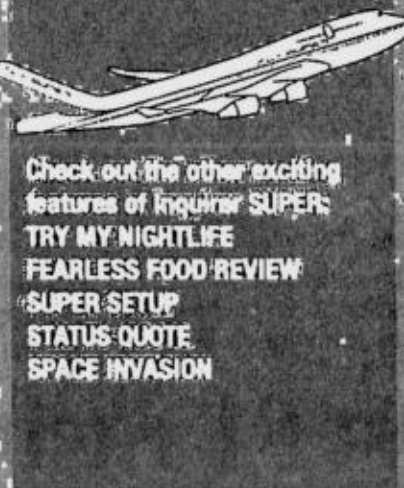
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Peso, stocks rally on Fed cut

But political uncertainty remains key concern

GOCC subsidy rose in first 8 months

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT's subsidy to government-owned and -controlled corporations jumped by a significant margin in January to August.

Finance officials said the increase was due to the conduct of more social services.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that the government spent P14.5 billion in subsidies to GOCCs in the first eight months of the year, rising by 75 percent from the P8.27 billion recorded in the same period last year.

The double-digit increase ran counter to the DOF's goal of reducing the financial dependence of state-owned firms on the national government. Finance officials said that, while it was ideal to trim subsidies to GOCCs, the agencies still have programs that needed additional funding.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said that, of the total subsidies for the first eight months, the biggest share of P3.8 billion was allotted to Land Bank of the Philippines in support of the government's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Another P2.8 billion was given to the National Housing Authority for its program to relocate more informal settlers from areas covered by the government's infrastructure projects.

Tan also said P2.1 billion went to Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PHIC), which needed additional funding for its healthcare program, and P1.37 billion was given to Technical Livelihood Resource Center (TLRC) for its various livelihood programs.

The finance official said the government was trying to limit its subsidy to state-owned firms for the entire year to P18.41 billion. This is higher by 33 percent than the P13.81 billion in total subsidies given to GOCCs last year.

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson and Doris C. Dumlaog

THE STOCK MARKET YESTERDAY drew a measure of comfort from the US Federal Reserve's decision to cut its benchmark interest rate by a larger-than-expected 50 basis points—a move that is seen to give the US economy a softer landing.

According to local analysts, the US Fed's move indicated that the worst could be over for global markets.

Following the announcement, the 29-company Philippine Stock Exchange index rose sharply by 2.23 percent or 73.23 points to 3,362.98.

The broader all-shares index also surged 41.44 points or 1.99 percent to 2,116.38.

The peso likewise rallied, closing at 45.57 against the US dollar.

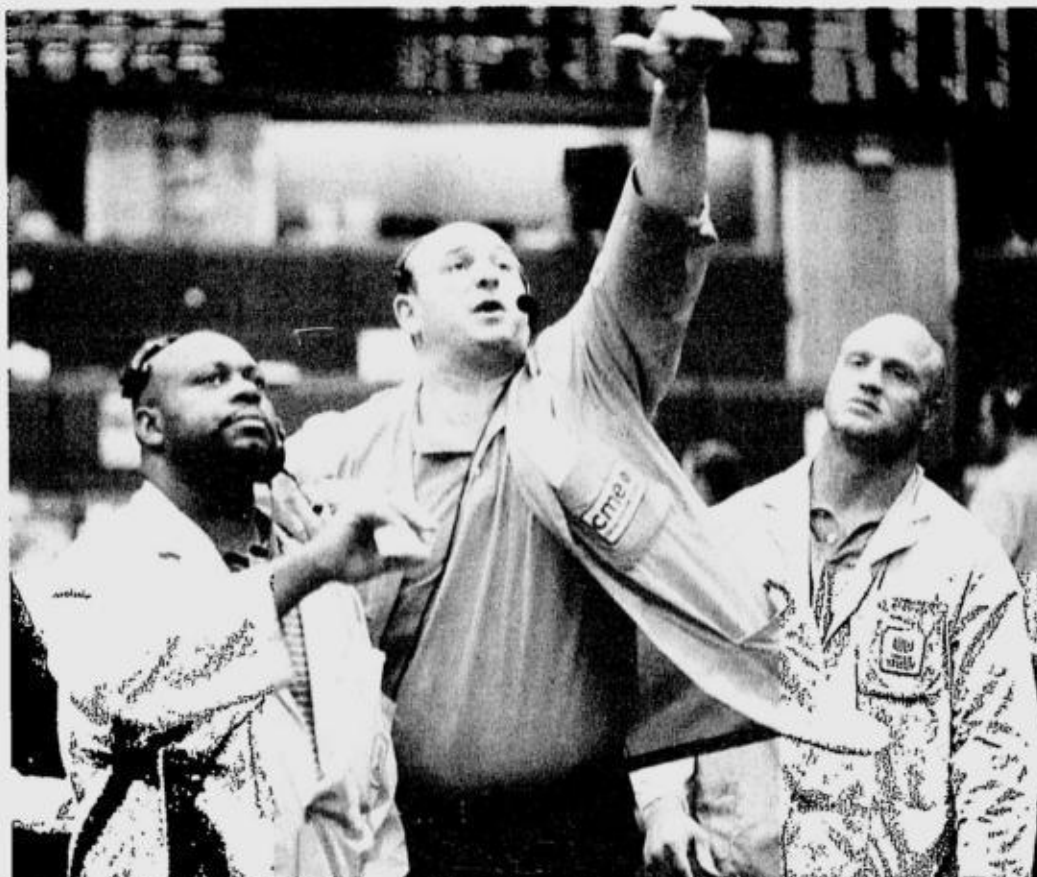
Volume at the spot forex market amounted to \$667.5 million, lower than the previous day's \$703.44 million.

In yesterday's trading, a total of 3.3 billion shares worth P3.9 billion (\$86 million) changed hands. Gainers led decliners 96 to 23, while 40 stocks were unchanged.

However, domestic political uncertainty and record-high crude oil prices remained key concerns and led to quick profit-taking during the session.

"There were bouts of profit-taking because of political concerns and rising oil prices," said Lawrence de Leon at Accord Capital Equities. "Investors will be keeping an eye out on local political developments."

President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband



CLERKS at the Euro Dollar pit of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange frantically relay trades after hearing word that the US Federal Reserve has slashed interest rates.

Jose Miguel Arroyo has been linked to an allegedly anomalous \$330-million telecom deal between the government and China's ZTE Corp. The deal had earlier been suspended by the Supreme Court.

"After trading cautiously in the last two days, the main index has broken out of the 3,350 resistance mark... reflecting the expected boost from the Fed's action," said Francisco Liboro of PCCI Securities Brokers Corp.

There were also worries over crude oil prices, after they rose to new peaks above \$82 a barrel in early Asian trading Wednesday. (See related story on this page.)

"The market was expecting a 25-basis-point cut last night and another quarter percentage cut in October," Jerome Gonzalez, head of research at fund manager PhilEquity Fund said. "By raising it to 50 basis points, the US Fed is saying that they're not

PESO/B4

Global oil prices rise above \$82

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES YESTERDAY went up above the previous session's record close, lifted by expectations that the interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve will accelerate growth and increase demand for already tight crude and gasoline supplies.

Light, sweet crude for October delivery added 66 cents to US\$82.17 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by mid-afternoon in Singapore.

The Fed cut its benchmark federal funds rate overnight by 50 basis points to 4.75 percent (See main story).

The move led to a surge in crude oil prices just moments after the announcement.

"The oil market has taken confidence from the cut in the federal funds rate," said David Moore, commodity strategist with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in Sydney.

"There had been concerns that US economic growth may slow and the US is the largest oil consumer, so it would potentially impact on oil demand," Moore said. "The Fed's rate cut has at least reduced the risks of a severe slowing in the US economy," he said.

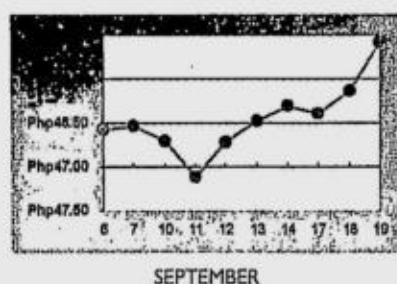
Nymex crude on Tuesday settled at a fresh record close of US\$81.51 a barrel, up 94 cents. It later hit an all-time high of US\$82.38 a barrel in after-hours trading. Analysts note, though, that oil prices are still well below inflation-adjusted highs of US\$96 to US\$101 a barrel achieved in the early 1980s.

Investors had already priced into the market a quarter-point cut in the benchmark federal funds rate, analysts said. The unexpected half-point cut spurred even more buying. Moreover, many analysts see

GLOBAL/B4

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PESO-DOLLAR RATE

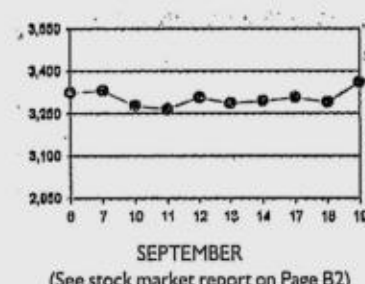
P 45.57 = \$1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 19, 2007

Y 115.92 = \$1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 19, 2007

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

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■ **Insurers expect reprieve from capital hike rule /B4**

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GOCC/B2

DMCI to convert advances to AG&P into equity

AGP Industrial seen waiving preemptive rights

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

CONSTRUCTION GIANT DMCI Holdings Inc. yesterday said it was considering converting a substantial portion of its P1 billion worth of cash advances to Atlantic Gulf & Pacific Co. (AG&P) into equity.

AG&P is the country's oldest engineering and construction company and is 46-percent owned by DMCI.

The planned conversion is expected to raise DMCI's stake in AG&P to more than 90 percent.

In a disclosure, DMCI said it would likely come up with the decision on this in 15 days. The move, it added, was in support of AG&P's planned capital increase to P3.5 billion from only P36 million, in terms of authorized capital stock.

Informed sources at DMCI said the company might not fully convert the entire P1 billion in cash advances into equity.

A full conversion of the P1 billion in cash advances into equity would increase DMCI's stake in AG&P to 98 percent.

DMCI further said in its disclosure that other shareholders such as Marubeni Corp., which holds a 10-percent stake in AG&P, were also given 15 days to decide whether it will infuse new capital to maintain their stakes.

Dormant listed firm AGP Industrial Corp., which owns 38 percent of AG&P, has indicated its plan to waive its preemptive rights.

Sources said this could mean that AGP Industrial was planning to exit AG&P as a shareholder.

Incorporated in 1970, AGP Industrial Corp. is an investment and management company organized for the purpose of acquiring the controlling stock of AG&P then the leading engineering and building contractor in the country.

INQUIRER sources said AG&P was

currently under court rehabilitation after it secured a stay order from the Batangas Regional Trial Court last Feb. 21, 2002 on the suspension of its debt payments.

As of end-2006, AG&P's total interest bearing loans to local banks and shareholders hit P1.6 billion.

AG&P filed for rehabilitation on Jan. 31, 2002 with Branch 2 of the Batangas RTC.

AG&P's steel fabrication plant is located in Batangas.

The petition for rehabilitation is still pending before the provincial court.

INQUIRER sources said the proposed conversion of cash advances to equity will help AG&P clean up its balance sheet—or a company's statement of liabilities compared with its assets—and to make the company more competitive in bidding for potential projects in Australia.

DMCI invested in AG&P in the 1990s.

GOCC subsidy rose in first 8 months

From page B1

to state-owned firms. The government also provides loans and infuses additional equity shares when the need arises.

The government is trying to instill fiscal discipline among GOCCs in an effort to reduce the budget deficit, the DOF said.

The government hopes to reduce

its deficit to P63 billion this year, from last year's P64.8 billion, and balance the budget by next year.

But due to poor tax collection, the government breached the deficit ceiling it set for itself for the first half of the year.

The improved collection in July and August later prompted finance officials to declare that the government's deficit-reduction

goal for the year could still be attained.

A scorecard system is being put up for GOCCs with the assistance from the Asian Development Bank.

Under the proposed system, operational and financial targets of a GOCC will be set at the beginning of the year and its performance will be measured using the agreed targets as basis.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 19, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS							
73.5	38	Banco de Oro Ppl Inc.	56	58	56	57.5	1,031,600
73.5	33	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68	66.5	65	65.5	2,295,400
935	630	China Banking Corp.	800	810	800	805	22,990
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	22.5	23	22.5	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	820,000
75.5	39.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	52.5	52.5	51	51.5	7,536,400
85.5	33	Philippine National Bank	48	48	47	47	110,000
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63	63	63	63	500
39.57	15	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23	23.25	22.75	22.75	2,415,100
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	70	70	68	68	196,600
66	47.5	Union Bank of the Philippines	56	56	56	56	70,700
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS							
5.5	1.76	ATM Kintong Financial Corp.	4	4	4	4	6,000
5.22	0.6	Bankang Inc.	1.98	2.02	1.94	2.02	8,899,000
16.25	2.8	CliffeOnline.com Inc.	11	11.25	10.75	10.75	552,400
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.9	0.87	0.9	30,000
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	5,000
1,805.00	1,550.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,800.00	1,805.00	1,800.00	1,805.00	620
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.46	2,574,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.9	1.9	36,000
1,005.00	230	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	790	790	790	790	2,100
2,335.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,330.00	2,335.00	2,330.00	2,335.00	690
1.04	1.3	Union Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	380,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER, & WATER							
2.2	1.8	Abolito Power Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2,338,300
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.28	650,000
70	47.5	First Gen Corp.	65.5	65.5	64	64	638,700
92	48	First Phil Holdings Corp.	73.5	73.5	72.5	72.5	289,100
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	14	14	13.75	13.75	380,000
105.45	17.05	Manila Electric Co.	80	82	79	80	1,672,300
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6	6.2	6	6.2	5,003,000
6.5	3.9	Petron Corp.	6	6.5	5.3	5.4	10,452,000
14.75	8.8	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	8.8	9	8.6	8.9	456,000
1.9	0.95	Trinity Energy Development Corp.	1.2	1.24	1.18	1.2	1,780,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO							
9.3	3.1	Ayala Food Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	8,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1,301,000
61	34	Jobidon Foods Corp.	52	52	52	52	312,800
1.96	0.84	RFM Corp.	1.58	1.66	1.58	1.6	369,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	61	61	60.5	61	41,800
88	59.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	61	61	60.5	61	638,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.25	7,446,300
0.55	0.26	Vitacola Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	50,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE, & RELATED SERVICES							
9.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	1,486,000
9.2	4.9	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	4,135,000
7	1.3	Republic Cement Corp.	4	4	4	4	10,000
2	0.8	San Juan Cement Works Inc.	1.1	1.18	1.08	1.16	17,300,000
CHEMICALS							
6.3	3.5	Chemical Technology Inc.	4.4	4.45	4.3	4.45	1,000,000
1.46	0.51	Mahabang Yuni Corp.	0.62	1.02	0.62	1	200,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES							
HOLDING FIRMS							
3.9	1.96	A. Soriano Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	300,000
0.17	0.025	AJO net Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.095	0.0975	17,900,000
1.28	0.22	APC Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.74	0.75	28,750,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	259,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	84,000
0.018	0.007	Abolito Equity Ventures Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	45,000,000
0.021	0.0075	Abolito Equity Ventures Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	45,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alcoron Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	90,100,000
4.9	2.8	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.1	5.1	1,854,000
590	375	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.28	2.3	2.24	2.24	570,000
5.8	1.22	Ayala Corp.	500	505	492.5	495	329,900
10.25	3.7	Bempres Holdings Corp.	3.7	3.75	3.6	3.7	16,620,000
6.9	1.06	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	8	8	358,000
2.5	0.7	Elon Properties Philippines Inc.	4.2	4.2	3.7	4.1	140,000
8	2.55	F and P Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	20,000
3.55	1.2	Farmvest Development Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	254,000
14.5	5.9	Group of Investments Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	988,000
0.8	0.205	HS Summit Holdings Inc.	9.5	9.7	9.5	9.6	1,700,000
11.5	1.1	Jollibee Holdings Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.68	1.68	156,000
6.2	0.01	Meico Holdings Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.42	0.5	120,000
6.2	0.01	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.7	5.3	4.7	5.3	18,856,000
6.2	0.01	PAI Holdings Inc.	7	7	7	7	352,710,000
6.2	0.01	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	50,000
0.75	0.125	Prime One Philippines Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.39	0.39	1,350,000
492.5	270.58	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	394,000
0.73	0.125	SM Investments Corp.	390	392.5	392.5	397.5	12,500,000
1.6	0.9	Sinopharm Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	100,000
0.75	0.1	TNC Steel Corp.	18.25	18.25	18	18	16,990,000
0.75	0.1	Waters Industries Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.72	0.73	16,990,000
PROPERTY							
2.34	0.81	A Brown Land Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	326,000
1.06	0.32	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	760,000
19.25	11.25	Aranea Properties Inc.	0.75	0.76	0.71	0.72	6,787,800
1.88	1.1	Ayala Land Inc.	1.475	1.5	1.45	1.475	6,610,000
4.7	2.65	Belle Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.12	1.14	661,000
0.86	0.31	Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	3,950,000
0.83	0.24	Crown Equities Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.62	0.63	3,990,000
0.99	0.35	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.43	0.44	0.43	0.44	1,600,000
0.87	0.05	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.68	0.58	0.68	8,710,000
1.48	0.48	Ever Globside Holdings and Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	11,810,000
2.44	1.12	Phi-Estate Land Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.1	8,721,000
0.49	0.1	Fininvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.39	1.4	35,491,000
1.12	0.24	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
4.4	1.73	MNC Allied Industries Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.69	12,380,000
6.4	1.5	Megaworld Corp.	3.3	3.45	3.2	3.25	91,372,000
0.67	0.125	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.6	3.85	3.6	3.85	6,000
0.87	0.32	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	4,670,000
9.2	1.1	Phosphate Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.44	0.44	4,000,000
23	12.5	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.9	4	3.9	4	140,000
6.9	1.5	Robinson Land Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	434,200
3.5	1.38	SM Development Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.75	6,272,000
3.25	0.87	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11	10.75	11	4,803,700
1.34	0.48	Shang Properties Inc.	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.6	33,000
0.49	0.06	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.62	0.64	0.6	0.64	11,997,000
0.49	0.08	Univide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	3,020,000
1.1	0.4	Univide Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	11,997,000
MEDIA							
38.5	16.75	ABN - ABC Broadcasting Corp.	31	31.5	31	31.5	8,400,000
11.75	8.1	ABS-CBN Corp.	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	2,980,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS							
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.24	2,625,000
1,435.00	1,045.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,300.00	1,385.00	1,355.00	1,360.00	214,300
2,620.00	2,150.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,745.00	2,770.00	2,745.00	2,760.00	1,000
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY							
0.43	0.17	Bancor and Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.2	0.185	0.2	30,000,000
21.5	8	IPV Corp.	8.6	8.8	8.4	8.4	787,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.03	19,100,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	15	15	15	15	3,900
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	318,000
0.22	0.043	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.134	0.135	0.135	0.135	11,430,000
2.08	1.1	Musix Semiconductors Corp.	1.22	1.32	1.22	1.3	2,853,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb Corp Inc.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	65,400,000
1	0.25	Trinity Technology and Services Int'l Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,000,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES							
2.14	1.34	Abulay International Logistics Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	1,000
6.8	3.35	Acuan Terminals Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	150,000
34.5	16	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	32.5	33	32.5	33	52,300
1.5	0.91	Kapoor Shipping Marine Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	11,000
HOTEL & LEISURE							
4.5	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	140,000
1.5	0.9	World Leisure Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1,000,000
EDUCATION							
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES							
1.5	0.8	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
6	6.6	Macro Asia Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	39,000
6	1.94	Macro Asia Corp.	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.65	397,000
6	17.25	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	10.1	11.2	11.5	11.75	67,000
30	10	Pays Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.5	50,500
150	22	Princess Corporation Philippines Inc.	130	130	130	130	1,000
MINING							
0.017	0.0085	Akzo Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	311,200,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	70,000
7.7	3.65	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	70,000
21.25	7	Altas Cos. Mining and Dev't Corp.	14	14.5	14	14.25	2,350,500
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.5	29,000
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	3,000
3.1	1.8	Geopress Resources Philippines Inc.	1.86	1.9	1.84	1.88	101,057,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.32	82,670,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	11,340,000
0.07	0.017	Mandaya Mining Corp. "A"	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	506,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.031	57,500,000
30	12	NHMO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	11.5	14.25	11.5	14	8,727,300
0.021	0.0079	Omicor Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	261,700,000
3.45	1.75	Philer Mining Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	6,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	32	32	30	31	681,500
1.36	0.39	United Pargana Mining Corp.	1.02	1.06	1	1.02	4,340,000
1.8	0.6	Veljan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	990,000
OIL							
0.58	0.25	Baskin Energy Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.32	0.32	2,284,000
0.025	0.0095	Oceana Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	109,100,000
0.027	0.01	Oceana Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	72,700,000
9	9	Petrobrum Resources Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	8,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philcrim Corp.	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	673,400,000

UBS optimistic on RP; DBS takes contrary view

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENT BANK UBS IS OPTIMISTIC that the government will meet its budget deficit target this year, saying that efforts to privatize state-owned assets will generate more than enough revenues to make up for a low tax collection.

"We share Finance Secretary (Margarito) Teves' confidence that the government's full-year deficit target of P63 billion can be met," Switzerland-based UBS said in its latest assessment of the Philippine economy.

The government suffered from an anemic tax collection in the first half, but main revenue collecting agencies showed improvement in July and August.

The Department of Finance also called for intensified efforts to sell state-owned assets to shore up revenues.

The government sold its 46-percent

stake in Philippine Telecommunications Investments Corp. early in the year for P25 billion and a 20-percent stake in Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) for P17 billion.

But DBS, an investment bank based in Singapore, was not impressed with the government's fiscal performance in August.

DBS noted that the Bureau of Customs surpassed its P20.8-billion collection target for the month only by a slight margin, turning in P20.9 billion to state coffers. The Bureau of Internal Revenue also failed to meet the target set by the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC).

The BIR collected P70.6 billion for the month, off the P82.3-billion target.

DBS said in a research paper that the revenue collection performance of the BIR and the BOC in July and August was still not enough to say that the government has already achieved fiscal discipline.

World closer to forging free trade deal, says WTO

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION sees a possible breakthrough this year in long-stalled negotiations aimed at boosting developing countries' access to western markets.

In a briefing yesterday, markets WTO director general Pascal Lamy said it's "doable" to firm up the skeleton agreement on further global trade liberalization this year in order to conclude revisions on the international tariff rule book envisioned by the Doha round.

"We know the direction. Developed countries have to do more than what they proposed in terms of reducing agricultural subsidies and farm tariffs and they have agreed to that. The only remaining question is how much is the range

that has been tabled," Lamy said.

The negotiations on the Doha round, which proposed a more ambitious blueprint on trade liberalization to help developing countries reap more benefits from trade globalization, have been stalled for five years over the extent of needed cuts on tariffs and trade subsidies.

The WTO—a multilateral organization comprising 150 member countries—is facing a complex task of amending a 20-chapter global trade rulebook.

Among the bones of contention are the chapters covering tariffs and subsidies on agriculture and industrial goods like textile and clothing. Some western countries like France and the United States, for instance, have been criticized for remaining overly protective of their domestic

farm sectors.

"Putting 150 countries to come to a consensus is terribly complex but the landscape has changed," said Lamy, noting that the WTO had mustered the necessary political support to push the successful conclusion of the Doha round.

"My diagnosis is that at the political level, things are converging. My own sense is that there are more chances of final convergence today than we have six months ago," he said.

Lamy was in town for a joint forum held with the Asian Development Bank that sought to mobilize "aid for trade" for developing countries.

"Aid for trade" involves the flow of development finance from rich to poor countries for the purpose of enhancing the world trading systems.

Food firms to tap halal mart in Persian Gulf

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY yesterday said it was embarking on another food exports roadshow to get into the largely untapped halal food market in the Persian Gulf.

At the same time, Suraida Guro, an officer with the DTI's Bureau of Export Trade Promotion, called on food manufacturers to obtain halal certification to be able to serve the strict requirements of the market.

"The many benefits of going halal has driven many food firms to obtain certification," Guro said, adding that the market represented some two billion Muslims who are taking advantage of the high quali-

ty and safety of halal food.

Guro, who is also the BETP's associate business development manager for halal products, said there would always be a market segment that would prioritize food products made in a clean, uncontaminated, germ-free environment, whether Muslim or not.

She said the DTI was organizing through the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions the IFEX Philippines roadshow to the GCC countries.

The GCC, or Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, groups Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Guro said the roadshow scheduled Nov. 5-18, would make stops in Jeddah and

Riyadh in Saudi Arabia; Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates; and Kuwait.

"(The) roadshow is also) an effort to nourish the burgeoning market for Filipino food in the region brought about by the fast growing population of overseas Filipino workers in the GCC," she said.

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Taking care of (family) business

FIRST GENTLEMAN MIGUEL ARROYO left the country last Monday night. He reportedly had DBP president Reynaldo David in tow, possibly all the way to Spain.

That night also happened to be the eve of the Senate blue ribbon committee hearing on the ZTE scandal.

Jose de Venecia III, aka Joey, eventually testified in the hearing that the "mystery man" in the ZTE deal was the First Gentleman himself.

No wonder then that he had to leave!

But news reports (he had in the INQUIRER) said that David, while he heads a government financial institution, was going abroad with Arroyo on a private trip.

And so, by implication, this David must be spending government money, right?

The only problem in the news reports was that David never left the country.

I interviewed him right in his office at the DBP the following morning on Tuesday.

Unless, of course, David has the ability to be in two places at one time! Or I was talking to a robot or something! Nayko!

ANYWAY, Joey is the son of House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., who is also known in my household as Yoda Venecia.

Yoda has been Speaker for five terms now.

In his fight for the current term, Yoda actually faced a worthy challenger in Rep. Pablo Garcia of Cebu.

That was the only province that delivered solid votes for this administration during the 2004 and 2007 national elections.

And so, the Garcia family asked the Lola at the Palace, that if she could not support Garcia in the fight against Yoda, then she could just stay neutral.

Yet, the Lola threw her all-out support for Yoda two days before the voting at the House.

Now the question is, who was taking advantage of whom here?

That is still anybody's guess, of course.

But according to my source, who is close to the Lola, she is starting to regret her decision to support Yoda.

That's probably why the son, Joey, in order to take care of some family business, insisted on calling the Lola as "my president." You know—something like A-kissing!

It's just that nobody knows if he used the term to mean ownership.

SAY WHAT you will about Joey, but the guy has mojos.

Well, at least that is the general impression of our contacts in business.

The young De Venecia risked everything in this controversy over a project that, according to technical experts, will just be a waste of government money.

Thus, according to our contacts, no matter the outcome of the scandal, Joey may have to change his career, possibly from IT investor to politician.

For who will dare do business with him again?

LAST TUESDAY, I reported on this administration's SPV program, or the "special purpose vehicle" program, which allows banks to sell their nonperforming accounts to in-

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III



vestors by selling them to big, moneyed groups.

As an example, I pointed out the experience of TF Ventures, which operates the "Best Western Astor Hotel" on Makati Avenue, a stone's throw away from the country's financial center on Ayala Avenue.

Manuel Morato, chair of TF Ventures, sent us a text message, saying that the final release of the TF Ventures loan from Land Bank was actually done in 2002—and not, as I reported, in 1999. The loan was actually made way back in 1994.

Those long years of delay in the loan release, apparently, made a huge difference in the cash flow of the TF Ventures hotel construction, damaging its viability.

In other words, the last portion of the loan was not released during the time of the man named Band... Wrist Band.

I heard that Land Bank froze the loan to TF Ventures upon instruction from the Palace at that time.

It was only during the time of the Lola that Land Bank finally honored its contract to fund the hotel project.

Today, the brand new hotel of TF Ventures is facing a takeover by the foreign group called Pogi, or the Philippine Opportunity for Growth and Income, made up of Deutsche Bank and Cargill.

And the court-appointed receiver seems to be on the side of Pogi.

HERE is the latest on the tax controversy surrounding the "Pall Mall" brand of cigarettes owned by the London-based British American Tobacco, or BAT.

It seems that former BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag already sent word to the House of Representatives that he would divulge the identities of government people who lobbied for BAT to reduce the excise tax on "Pall Mall."

The House is poised to conduct an investigation into the "Pall Mall" tax mess, and most likely, Buñag will be called to testify.

Reports have it that an influential politician worked hard for the DOF ruling that eventually overturned the BIR ruling, which imposed a P26 a pack excise tax on "Pall Mall." The DOF ruling in turn reduced the excise tax to just P6.74 a pack.

But who was the politician?

It may be up to the House to find out from Buñag.

Meantime, BAT—presumably together with its supposed local licensee for "Pall Mall," which is the Cheng family's La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Factory—is claiming that the excise tax of P6.74 set by the DOF (versus the P26 set by the BIR) will be more or less a permanent tax rate.

BAT's line is that it will take an act of Congress to change the tax rate.

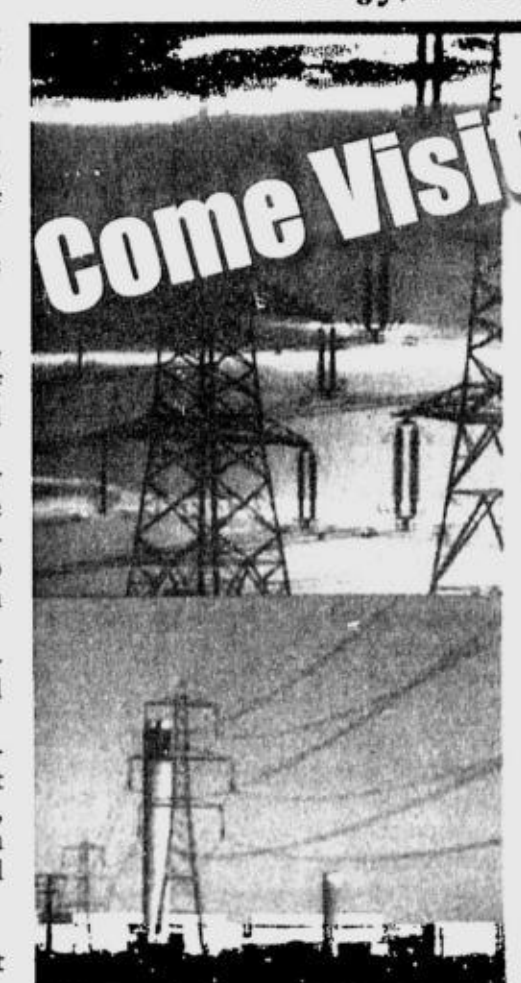
Even if, boss, BAT raises the price of Pall Mall?

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Insurers expect reprieve from capital hike rule

Indian firms urged to make RP their hubs in Asean

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE and Industry yesterday urged visiting Indian businessmen to consider making the Philippines their base of operations in Southeast Asia.

A group of businessmen from India is in the country to explore business opportunities here.

PCCI chair emeritus Miguel B. Varela said his group was encouraging companies from India to consider joint ventures with local companies and make their operations here a stepping stone to other markets in the region.

"We hope they would see our country as a possible Southeast Asian hub especially amid ongoing efforts toward economic integration," he said, referring to the initiative to build the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Economic Community by 2015.

Yesterday, PCCI's Philippine-India Business Council hosted a Buyers-Sellers' meeting held at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati City, where 11 Indian companies explored possible tie-ups with local firms.

The business mission was composed of members of the Engineering and Export Promotion Council of India, an organization of the Ministry of Commerce.

In a statement, EEPC chair Rakesh Shah said his group, which was established in 1955, was India's largest export promotion council, with about 13,000 member firms covering all sorts and sizes of engineering firms.

India's engineering exports to Asean accounted for \$2.71 billion or 10 percent of total engineering exports in fiscal year 2006-2007 that ended last March 31.

Shah said the Philippines, which accounts for 6.9 percent or \$186.25 million of India's engineering exports to Asean, presented "a very promising future."

He said the amount represented 24.8 percent of Philippine-India trade which was valued at \$749.8 million in 2006-2007.

eTelecare buying AOL unit in RP

NEW YORK—ETELECAR GLOBAL SOLUTIONS Inc. said on Wednesday it agreed to buy the Philippines unit of AOL for about \$7.2 million.

AOL Member Services-Philippines Inc. operates a nonvoice customer care and technical support delivery center near Manila, eTelecare said.

The deal, expected to close at the end of the month, will help eTelecare further develop its nonvoice service offerings, including e-mail and chat, by adding about 1,000 employees in the Philippines, the firm said. AOL is a division of Time Warner Inc. **Reuters**

New IC chief says circular to be issued before end of the year

By Michelle V. Remo

NEWLY REAPPOINTED INSURANCE Commissioner Eduardo Malinis is inclined to defer the implementation of the yearly increases in the capitalization and net worth requirements imposed on insurance companies.

The increases were ordered by former Insurance Commissioner Evangelina Escobillo, who had said that higher net worth and capital requirements would ensure the insurance firms' ability to service the claims of policyholders.

But Malinis said insurance firms found it difficult to comply with the capital hike requirement at this

point in time.

"Insurance firms feel that the increase in capitalization requirement is too abrupt. A regulation must be reasonable. If it is unreasonable, then don't expect them (insurance firms) to comply," Malinis told reporters.

He said that before the end of the year, the Insurance Commission would issue a circular postponing the implementation of the increases in capital and net worth requirements on life and nonlife insurance firms.

Malinis said some insurance firms were not yet capable of meeting the required capital and net worth increases. He based this on recent dialogues with representatives from the

insurance industry.

Department Order No. 27-2006, issued last year by then Insurance Commissioner Escobillo, requires both life and nonlife insurance firms to meet higher minimum paid-up capital and net worth.

The increase was supposed to be implemented yearly over the medium term. The amount of capitalization and net worth required is higher for companies with higher foreign equity.

For instance, a wholly owned Filipino life or nonlife insurance firm, which was supposed to have a minimum net worth of P100 million and minimum paid-up capitalization of

P50 million as of December 2006, should raise its net worth and capital yearly until it reaches P500 million and P250 million, respectively, by 2011.

An insurance firm with foreign equity of 40 percent or less, which was supposed to have a net worth of P200 million and minimum capital of P100 million as of December 2006, should reach a net worth of P600 million and capital of P300 million by 2010.

The supposed yearly increase in capitalization and net worth requirements met stiff opposition from members of the insurance industry, which said the order would lead to closure especially of smaller industry players.

COMPETITIVE EDGE SLIMMING

Indian outsourcing firms seen moving to RP, China

BANGALORE—INDIAN OUTSOURCING companies are shifting some of their operations to China, the Philippines, Vietnam and Kenya in a bid to stay competitive as higher wages, expensive property prices and a rising rupee eat into profits.

Back-office services companies thrive on doing jobs such as taking customer calls, payroll management and accounting at a fraction of the cost for big multinational firms or governments.

But costs in India are climbing on the back of a robust economy that has lured skilled workers to other sectors, forcing companies to look elsewhere to stay in business.

"If I was only in India, I probably would have been worried to death," said Partha Sarkar, chief executive of HTMT Global Solutions Ltd.

Firms moving out

The Bangalore-based back-office services provider used to generate all its revenue from India by servicing clients in the United States. But India now accounts for little over half the total, and rapid expansion in the Philippines and Mauritius has helped it offset the impact of a stronger rupee.

"Three years back, I was completely exposed to rupee-dollar," Sarkar said. "Now it doesn't worry me. I have diversified my currency and country risk."

In July, Infosys Technologies, India's second largest software services exporter, said it would buy three of Royal Philips Electronics' back-office services units in Thailand, Poland and India to expand market presence.

The back-office services unit of the third largest software exporter Wipro



INVESTORS cite improving infrastructure and perks in RP.

Ltd. plans to set up two facilities in China to tap growing business opportunities there, its chief executive T.K. Kurien said.

India's English-speaking workforce, a big factor in winning call center jobs, faces competition from countries like Kenya.

India's share in the global back-office services pie will drop to 50 percent in the next 3-5 years from about 60 percent now, said US-based Tholons Inc., which offers management consultancy for offshoring.

Skills shortage

India produces about 2.5 million graduates every year, versus 400,000 in the Philippines, but only about 15 percent are suitable for employment in the outsourcing sector.

US-based outsourcing firm 24/7

Customer, which has multiple facilities in India, interviews 5,000 candidates a month in this country, but is able to recruit only about 250, chief marketing officer V. Bharathwaj said.

This is pushing up wages rapidly as financial firms from Citigroup and HSBC to Standard Chartered Bank employ thousands at their back-office hubs in India.

Starting wages at 15,000 rupees (\$366) a month are still about one-fifth of what their US counterparts earn, but they are rising 10-15 percent a year.

Cost per employee for a back-office firm in Bangalore is almost similar to Manila, but is 20 percent lower in Guangzhou in China and 35 percent cheaper in Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam, said Avinash Vashistha, chief execu-

tive of Tholons.

Analysts say that while Vietnam does not have a vast pool of English-speaking manpower, it is a prime destination for nonvoice back-office services such as legal and medical transcription, claims processing, and finance and accounting.

Adding to the squeeze is the rupee, Asia's best performing currency this year, which climbed to a nine-year high of 40.20 against the dollar, up 10 percent since end-2006, while the Philippine peso has gained more than 5 percent.

Every one percent rise in the rupee impacts the services firms' margins by 30-50 basis points, analysts say.

"Everything is hitting us adversely," said Kiran Karnik, president of the National Association of Software and Service Companies. "Wages are going up, real estate costs are escalating and on top of that you have the dollar exchange rate going bad."

Tougher competition

India's back-office services industry, which earned \$8.4 billion in exports in the year to March, is also being lured by tax breaks, infrastructure improvements and investment perks offered by China and the Philippines, he said.

The industry is also anxiously watching for any ripple effect from the US subprime mortgage crisis, with some smaller firms feeling the pinch as US companies trim spending on services.

However, Infosys' outsourcing unit sees an opportunity here, reckoning that the need to cut costs would be even more prevalent in an economic downturn, potentially boosting business. **Reuters**

SM unit, Accor sign deal on Mactan hotel operation

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SM INVESTMENTS CORP. HAS signed a contract with Accor, an international hotel chain known for its Sofitel brand, for the management and operation of the SM group's P2.8-billion hotel in Mactan, Cebu.

The five-star, 400-room hotel, located beside SM City Cebu, will carry the Sofitel brand.

Accor is the European leader in ho-

tels and tourism business. It operates more than 3,800 hotels in 90 countries bearing the Sofitel, Pullman, Novotel, Mercure, Suitehotel and All Seasons brands.

The Mactan hotel will be inaugurated in December next year.

The Cebu hotel was designed by Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo (WATG), the designer of many of the world's great hotels and resorts such as the Claridges in London, The Pan

Pacific Hotel in Singapore and the Atlantis at the Bahamas.

SMIC's hotel investment group, which signed the contract with Accor, was organized to optimize multiple investment vehicles in travel and tourism, and add value to the existing businesses of the holding firm.

The group owns Taal Vista Hotel, which is being expanded to increase its capacity to 260 rooms by November 2008 from the current

128 rooms.

The expansion, which will cost P650 million, will also add a 1,000-seater grand ballroom and six meeting rooms.

Other SMIC hotel projects in the pipeline include those being put up in SM Bay City near Mall of Asia and the Microtel project, a hotel in Hamilo Coast, and several boutique hotels in selected sites in Luzon and the Visayas.

Gov't urged to speed up MRT contract buy-back

A CIVIC ORGANIZATION HAS LAUDED the government's decision to buy back the Edsa MRT contract from the private consortium that built the light rail system and to refinance its loan obligations with cheaper funds from the capital market.

These moves are expected to enable the government to realize \$380 million in savings.

The Edsa Para sa Masa earlier urged the government to expand and extend the Edsa MRT in the wake of unprecedented increase in rider patronage and to sustain the efficiency of the system.

The group warned early this year that current ridership of the system "may have already exceeded capacity." The group claimed that some half-a-million passengers use the system daily. Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) figures, however, put the figures at slightly lower than 500,000 passengers per day.

In a statement, the group expressed confidence in the recent pronouncements of the Department of Finance (DOF) and the DOTC that the buy-back and refinancing scheme would generate enough funds for the acquisition of new trains into the system and to expand the line in the remaining stretch of Edsa from North Triangle in Quezon City to Monumento in Caloocan.

This will involve the interconnection of LRT Lines 1 and 3 in the North. Since the two systems are already linked up in the south at the Taft Avenue-Edsa intersection, the interconnection in the north would close the train loop along the busiest business, commercial and light industrial sections of Metro Manila.

The Edsa Para sa Masa said the move by the DOF "is a timely and adequate response to the clamor of Edsa commuters."

"We hope the government consummates the arrangement the soonest so the savings can be generated and applied to the expansion and extension of the system," the group said.

Peso, stocks rally on Fed cut

letting markets continue with volatility. With last night's Wall Street performance, it seems the worst is over."

Gonzalez added that a US interest rate cut would mean a weaker dollar, which would lend strength to other currencies such as the peso. A rate cut may also make emerging markets more attractive than the US market since holding dollar assets will become more expensive.

As the US central bank eased the credit crunch that has spooked financial markets across the globe by undertaking its first rate cut in over four years, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas hinted of a forthcoming monetary easing of its own.

"The Fed decision accords the BSP some room for maneuver in our own rate setting, given that the outlook for inflation continues to be benign," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said.

Global oil prices rise above \$82

a weaker dollar as a natural side effect of lower rates, and that could promote buying of oil contracts by foreign investors.

Prices also rose as investors looked ahead to an inventory report to be released later Wednesday by the US Energy Department's Energy Information Administration, expected to show inventories and refinery

activity declined last week. Although the easing by the US Fed was expected, Tetangco said it was the size of the rate cut and the accompanying statement that provided market relief.

In a forum with the Quijano de Manila Foundation, Tetangco declined to say how soon the BSP would adjust its own rates.

"Obviously, this is something that we will discuss on Oct. 4," Tetangco said.

Across Asia, stocks soared in the wake of Wall Street's overnight surge spurred by the US Fed's rate cut.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 stock index jumped 579.74 points, or 3.7 percent, to close at 16,381.54 points. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index was up a stunning 1,004 points, or 4.1 percent, at 25,581.13 in afternoon trading.

Stock markets in South Korea, India, Australia, Singapore and Taiwan also advanced, although Chinese shares faltered. **With reports from AP, AFP**

From page B1

From page B1

Steel company seeks to remove receiver

STEEL CORPORATION OF THE Philippines, a steel manufacturer based in Batangas, has asked the Court of Appeals to remove the firm's court-appointed rehabilitation receiver, Santiago Gabionza, for allegedly pushing for the takeover by creditors of the steel company.

In a statement, Steel Corp. claimed Gabionza, instead of working on the firm's rehabilitation, had pushed for the takeover of the steel firm by the creditors via debt-to-equity conversion. Steel Corp. is owned by PhilSteel Corp. of businessman Abeto Uy.

On Sept. 11, 2006, Equitable PCI Bank, Steel Corp.'s largest creditor, filed with a Batangas trial court a petition for the rehabilitation of the steel company, which was burdened by some P7.9 bil-

lion in obligations. This resulted in the appointment of Gabionza as the rehabilitation receiver.

In a phone conference with reporters, Gabionza denied he had been biased in making his recommendations on how Steel Corp. should go about its rehabilitation.

He said that of the company's debt, about P3.5 billion was considered "unsustainable" or the portion of the debt that the firm could no longer pay using operational income alone.

He explained that in a modified rehabilitation proposal, he recommended three phases to settle the firm's debts.

The first involves the infusion of P3.5 billion by the owners. Should this fail, the company can bring in a partner who will infuse the amount. If this can't be done, then and only then can a debt-to-equity conversion be considered, which would give creditors a 50-percent stake in the steel firm while the owners will keep the balance of 50 percent, Gabionza said. **Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson**



Home Guaranty Corporation

Office of the President

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR THE NEGOTIATED DISPOSITION OF APEC VILLA 9, 10 & 11

The Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) is inviting all interested parties to submit proposals for the disposition of its "leasehold rights" on the following properties located at Triboa Bay, Subic Freeport Zone, Olongapo City on a "negotiated" retail basis (sale, lease and other similar or variant schemes):

	PROPERTY LOCATION	TYPE	FLOOR AREA	REMARKS
1	APEC Villa No. 9	one storey house	436	fully furnished, vacant
2	APEC Villa No. 10	two storey house	440	fully furnished, vacant
3	APEC Villa No. 11	two storey house	433	fully furnished, vacant

* Lease Term : 50 years

- The sale of the properties shall be on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis;
- Terms of Payment may be in cash or installment for outright sale proposal;
- Offers for lease must indicate the proposed terms of lease including provision for escalation of lease rate; and
- For other similar or variant scheme, the proposed terms of sale must be indicated.

HGC reserves the right to require additional information from the offeror as it deems necessary to fully understand and evaluate the offer(s).

Interested parties are encouraged to inspect the property before tendering their offers.

Details pertaining to the properties as well as the guidelines for the negotiation can be obtained from the HGC's Asset Management and Disposition Group (AMDG) office located at the 4th Floor of Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City from **September 17 to 21, 2007** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P 5,000.00**.

The Financial proposals/offers shall be sealed and dropped at the designated box located at the HGC's AMDG office on **September 27, 2007**.

For inquiries, please call the Marketing and Sales Department at tel. nos. 896-04-25 & 897-34-18 or visit our office at 4th Floor, Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

THE CORPORATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS, TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS OR TO ACCEPT SUCH OFFER AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CORPORATION.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL P. DE LOS SANTOS**
Vice President
Asset Management & Disposition Group

(PDI-Sept. 19 & 20, 2007)



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Science and Technology
FOOD AND NUTRITION RESEARCH INSTITUTE
General Santos Avenue, Bicutan, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel. Nos.: 837-2934; 837-2071 to 82; Fax No. (832) 837-3164

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The FOOD AND NUTRITION RESEARCH INSTITUTE - DOST invites prospective suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following item.

Item / Description	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)	End-User
		Pre-Bid Conference	Final Opening of Bids		
1 unit Gas Chromatograph with Flame Ionization Detector	P 2.3 M	Sept. 27, 2007 10:00 AM	Oct. 8, 2007 10:00 AM	P 2,300.00	FSTD

Bid forms may be obtained from the FNRI - Bids and Awards - Secretariat, Property Section, FNRI Bldg., DOST Cpd., Bicutan, Taguig City, Metro Manila from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM during office hours starting September 18, 2007.

Pre-Bid conference will be held on October 8, 2007 at the FNRI Conference Room. Attendance is a MUST for all concerned parties namely, BAC members, Technical Working Group members and accredited suppliers.

For more information, please call Ms. Yolanda G. Perlas / Mr. Hilario "Jun" Sanchez, Jr. at the tel. no. 837-61-49.

FNRI reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. FNRI assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that may be incurred in participating in the bidding.

(Sgd.) **ZENAIDA V. NARCISO, Ph.D.**
Chairman, FNRI-Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Sept. 20 & 21, 2007)



LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000, 528-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time		Non-Refundable Fee
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/Opening of Bids	
1 Lot Services of Professional Electrical Engineer to Provide Technical Expertise, Supervision, Labor, Materials, Tools and Equipment for the Preparation/Drawing, Signing and Sealing of Ten (10) Sets of Consolidated Electrical As-Built Plans of the LANDBANK Plaza Building, Malate, Manila	P2,130,000.00	September 27, 2007 2:00 PM	October 10, 2007 1:00 PM	P 1,500.00
1 Lot Services of Professional Mechanical Engineer to Provide Technical Expertise, Supervision, Labor, Materials, Tools and Equipment for the Preparation/Drawing, Signing and Sealing of Ten (10) Sets of Consolidated Mechanical As-Built Plans of the LANDBANK Plaza Building, Malate, Manila	730,000.00			

The Bid Documents shall be available at the Procurement Department starting September 20, 2007 upon payment of applicable non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at Procurement Department Bidding Room, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila.

Please address your queries to the Head-Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee, or call 405-7370; 551-0000 locals 2290 & 2293.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

(PDI-Sept. 20, 2007)

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
BANSEC GROUP INC. Unit 215-216 TMBC Bldg., 6772 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Justin Antoniadis Australian	President and Chief Executive Officer
MYFLOT VENTURES, INC. Unit 805-806 One Corporate Plaza, Arnaz Ave., Legaspi Village, Makati City	David James Helmbreck American	Foreign English Specialist
GREEN SIAM RESOURCES CORP. 112-A Katipunan Ave., White Plains Subd., Quezon City	Suthisilp Lert-Uttarat Thai	Marketing Manager
TRI-PHIL INTERNATIONAL INC. B1 L8 RM Tiosejo Industrial Complex, Bo. Tunasan, Muntinlupa City	Daljiro Nakazawa Japanese	Technical Consultant
EDUNARA, INC. C&D 21/F Strata 2000 F. Ortigas Jr. Ave., Ortigas Corp. Ctr., Pasig City	Gregory Philip Korzec American	English Instructor Associate
SERVICIO.COM INC. 5/F Tycoon Center, Pearl Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Joseph Wayland Linhart Jr. American	Director for Media Sales
CBC IMPORT & EXPORT TRADING LTD. CO. Rm 602-A Taylana Plaza Bldg., Plaza Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo, Manila	Shangpin Hong Chinese	Technical Consultant
BIO GREEN PROCESSING & MANUFACTURING INC. Unit 715 TMBC (Manila Bank) Bldg., 6772 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Seongyoung Choi Korean	Accounting Manager
ASIAGEL CORPORATION B1 L2 Villa Lourdes Townhomes, Congressional Ave., Bahay Toro, Quezon City	Sergio Alvaro Romaro Torres Spanish	Technical Consultant
PHILJOUN TOUR & TRAVEL CORP. G-1 Legaspi Tower 300, Roxas Blvd., Manila	Jongwon Han Korean	General Manager
TOKYO HEALTHLINK, INC. Unit R-2 El Molito Bldg., Madrigal Ave., Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Seoyong Lee Korean	Clinic Adviser
DIALMAGIC, INC. Unit 1802-03 88 Corporate Center Sedeno cor. Valero Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Paul Calder Le Roux Australian	President
FIRST CAGAYAN LEISURE AND RESORT CORPORATION 26/F West Tower Philippine Stock Exchange Center, Exchange Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Lili Wang Chinese	Technical Assistant
AREMCI BUILDERS 801 Cityland Pasong Tamo Tower, 2210 Don Chino Rocas Ave., Makati City	Tony Martinez Jr. American	Finance Officer
5A'S INTERNATIONAL AGENCY CORPORATION 406 P. Tuazon St., Project 4, Quezon City	Kazunari Kishishita Japanese	General Manager
TAO SOLUTIONS, INC. 106 Neptune St., Belair II, Makati City	Sajal Dutta Bangladeshi	Software Engineer
ICT MARKETING SERVICES, INC. 19/F RCBC Plaza Tower 2, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Michael James Polley Canadian	Senior Director of Operations
PARAGON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER CARE LIMITED 14/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Avraham Elyahu Israeli	Chief Financial Officer

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

HAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI-September 20, 2007)

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICE

PROVINCE CEBU

CITY MUNICIPALITY CEBU CITY

NOTICE OF CEBU CITY

In compliance with Section 6 of R.A. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that ROMMEL CABILDO KHO has filed with this Office a PETITION FOR CHANGE OF FIRST NAME from ROMMEL to ROMMEL in the certificate of live birth of ROMMEL CABILDO KHO, who was born on DECEMBER 14, 1988 in CALOOCAN CITY, RIZAL whose parents are ZOTICO FORTICH KHO and ESPERANZA BALATBAT CABILDO.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may within ten (10) calendar days from date hereof or within seven (7) days from the last day of publication, file a written opposition with this office.

Cebu City, September 18, 2007

(Sgd.) ATTY. EVANGELINE T. ABATAYO

City Civil Registrar

(PDI-Sept. 20 & 27, 2007)

PE&P

Study: BP reduction lowers diabetic deaths

BLOOD PRESSURE LOWERING IN DIABETICS with a combination of an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor (perindopril) and diuretic (indapamide) has been shown to reduce the risk of cardiovascular events, including death from diabetes complications, by 20 percent. The benefit was noted even in diabetics who have normal blood pressures.

This is the main finding of the Advance study, a landmark trial presented in a Hot Line Session during the recently concluded congress of the European Society of Cardiology in Vienna, Austria. The study reinforces the message to aggressively treat the blood pressure in diabetics.

The authors said that if the benefits seen in Advance were applied to just half the diabetic population worldwide, 1.5 million deaths would be avoided over five years. Diabetes is now considered a coronary heart disease equivalent with diabetics having the same high risk of developing a heart attack as a non-diabetic patient who already had a previous heart attack.

According to professor Stephen MacMahon, from the George Institute for International Health in Australia, the benefits for diabetics shown in the Advance study were not dependent on baseline blood pressure or other treatments for type 2 diabetes being taken by the patients. He called for routine blood pressure reduction to be considered in all patients with type 2 diabetes.

The need for blood pressure lowering in diabetics was also reinforced by professor John Chalmers, chair of the Advance collaborative study group. "The results (of the Advance study) clearly demonstrate that we have the tools to blunt the impact of the global diabetes epidemic, but concerted action is urgently required to ensure that patients with diabetes are identified and provided with treatments proven to improve important outcomes like survival."

Citing actual numbers, MacMahon said that one death would be avoided for every 78 patients treated with the fixed combination of perindopril and indapamide over five years.

The Advance study complements the results of another landmark trial-the United Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study published 9 years ago which showed that treating hypertension in diabetics reduced their risk of complications. But it did not address the question if additional benefits could be obtained in diabetics with normal blood pressure.

The Advance study, which was also published online by the prestigious Lancet journal, is considered a landmark trial because it is the largest ever study in the treatment of diabetes. It included 11,140 patients (both with normal and high blood pressures) with type 2 diabetes. The study was conducted in 200 research centers in 20 different countries including the Philippines. The patients were randomized to receive either placebo or a fixed combination of perindopril (an ACE inhibitor) and indapamide (a thiazide-like diuretic) in a single fixed-dose combination tablet once daily or placebo. Mean follow-up period of patients enrolled in the study was 4.3 years.

The main results of the Advance study include: a relative risk reduction of 14 percent in all-cause deaths among diabetics receiving the perindopril/indapamide combination, a relative risk reduction of 18 percent for cardiovascular deaths, a risk reduction of 8 percent for non cardiovascular deaths and a risk reduction of 9 percent for major big-vessel (macro-) and small-vessel (micro-) complications. Diabetics are prone to develop complications in practically all organs of the bodies due to its destructive effects on both small and big blood vessels.

The study also showed that the risk of coronary heart disease events such as a heart attack was reduced by 14 percent and the risk of new or worsening kidney disease was reduced by 21 percent.

Health experts are alarmed by the rapidly evolving diabetes epidemic. It is estimated that there are approximately 250 million people worldwide with type 2 diabetes, most of whom will die or be disabled by complications of their condition.



ANNOUNCEMENT

This is to inform the public that **Ms. VERONICA Y. UY - GO** is employed as a Manager by Dermaco, Inc. effective 6 September 2007.

(PDI-Sept. 20, 2007)

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The Board of Directors, Management, and Staff of the
Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation

pray for the eternal repose of its
President and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors

MICHAEL ABLAZA OSMEÑA

(May 27, 1950 – September 17, 2007)

who peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 57.

PDIC President Osmeña is survived by his wife **Theresa**; his sons, **Ramon**,
Anton, and **Stefan**; and his father, **Atty. Ramon M. Osmeña**.

His cremated remains lie in state at the Manila Memorial Funeraria Paz
Sucat, Parañaque. Interment will be on Saturday, September 22, 2007 at the
St. James the Great Church, Ayala Alabang Village after the 9:00 a.m. funeral mass.

We join everyone in praying for the soul of PDIC President Osmeña,
and for his bereaved family for strength and continued faith in this time of grief.

In lieu of flowers, the Osmeña family requests that donations be made to the
UP-PGH Cancer Institute and/or *Hospicio de San Jose*.

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadows of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff,
they comfort me." – Psalm 23:4

Our Beloved Nanay

Felicisima Pleno-Tiongson Mananghaya

of Sta. Barbara, Baliwag, Bulacan

Peacefully joined our Creator, her spouse, **Nicasio** (†),
and her children **Elias** (†) and **Paul** (†),
on September 7, 2007 in Las Vegas, Nevada at the age of 89.

Her children: **Mario & Remy**, **Mary & Dale**, **Ed & Rose**;
Her grandchildren: **Ral & Joy**, **Agnes**, **Michelle & Nick**, **Katie** and **Nicholas**;
And great grandchildren: **Nina** and **Philippe**
Request relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.
Her remains will arrive in Manila on Saturday, September 22, 2007
and will lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue,
Quezon City until September 25, 2007.

Her remains will then be transferred to Sto. Cristo Chapel, Baliwag, Bulacan in the
morning of September 26. A requiem mass will be held at 3 p.m. of the same day.
Interment follows at 4 p.m. on September 26, 2007 at the Baliwag Catholic Cemetery.

In Loving Memory

Three years ago, September 20, 2004
a loving devoted husband, father, son and grandfather

ROY D. PAPA

Left this world to join our Creator in His Heavenly Kingdom.
His family requests relatives and friends to remember him
in prayers on this day.
"Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon him."

Holy Masses will be offered today,
Thursday, September 20, 2007 at the following churches:

Immaculate Conception Parish, Malabon City 6:00 AM; 6:00 PM
Mary the Queen, Madison St., Greenhills 6:00 AM
Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills 7:15 AM
Santuario de San Antonio, 7:30 AM
Farbes Park, Makati City
Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 6:00 AM
Orense St., Makati City
National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, Quezon City all masses
Nuestra Señora de Guña Parish, 6:00 PM
M.I. del Pilar, Ermita, Manila
National Shrine of Mother of Perpetual Help, Baclaran 6:00 AM
Mt. Carmel Shrine, Quezon City 6:30 AM
Our Lady of the Abandoned Church, Sta. Ana, Manila 6:30 AM
Our Lady of Remedios Parish, Makati, Manila 6:00 PM
Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Pasay City 6:00 AM
National Shrine of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, 6:00 AM
Quezon City
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene, Quiapo, Manila 6:00 AM
St. Francis Church Parish, Mandaluyong 7:00 AM
St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 5:00 PM
San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila
Christ the King Parish, Quezon City 6:30 AM; 6:00 PM
Ave Maria Law School 11:00 AM
Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
Carmel of Our Lady, 6:00 AM; 4:00 PM
Mary of Mediatrix of all Grace, Lipa City
Shrine of Our Lady of Manuog, Pangasinan 7:00 AM
Basilica Minor of Our Lady of Pinat, Pinat, Cagayan 6:00 AM

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635-0219;
635-0220

TOMASA DE LEON LUIS

of Laoag, Ilocos Norte

has joined our Creator and
passed on to eternal life
on September 17, 2007 at the
Veterans Memorial Hospital.

Her children **Ernie** and **Hien**;
Roger and **Hedy**; **Rudy** and
Norma; **Noel** and **Arlene**;
grandchildren and great-
grandchildren; relatives and loved
ones commend her to our Lord
with joy.

She lies in state at the Marikina
Loyola Memorial Park Chapels in
Marikina.

Holy Mass will be held at 9 A.M.,
September 20, 2007 before
interment at Loyola Memorial
Park, Marikina.

"...absent from the body to be
present with the Lord."

2 Corinthians 5:8

Architect ALMANZOR ESPANA TUBIG

who passed away last September 20, 2006.

His wife Leticia, children **Alana & Arnel**, **Aleta**, **Alma**, **Allan**, grandsons **Andrew**
& **Alex** request relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches:

Parish of San Roque	6:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m.
Pateros, Metro Manila	
Garden of Memories Memorial Park	3:00 p.m.
Calatung Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila	
Shrine of Saint Anne	6:00 p.m.
Sta. Ana, Taguig City	
Saint Ignatius of Loyola Parish	6:00 a.m.
Ususan, Taguig City	
National Shrine of the Sacred Heart	7:00 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 6:00 p.m.
Dao St., San Antonio Village, Makati City	
St. Joseph the Worker Parish	7:00 a.m.
Palanan, Makati City	
St. John Bosco Parish	12:15 p.m.
Arnauz St., Makati City	
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish	12:15 p.m.
Kalayaan Ave., Bel-Air, Makati City	
San Guillermo Parish	6:00 a.m.
Buting, Pasig City	
San Pedro Parish	6:00 a.m.
San Pedro, Laguna	
Holy Rosary Cathedral	12:10 p.m.
Vancouver B.C., Canada	
St. Paul's Church	8:00 a.m.
Richmond, B.C., Canada	

Masses will also be held at The Church of Saint Vincent Ferrer, Lexington Ave.,
New York, New York, St. James Church, Broad St. Red Bank, New Jersey,
St. Joseph Church, Peachtree St. Herndon, Virginia, U.S.A.

ERRATUM

In the obituary of
MICHAEL ABLAZA OSMEÑA
published on September 19, 2007,
the position "Former Assistant
President, Citibank N.A."
should have read "Former Assistant
Vice President, Citibank N.A."

Our apologies.

DEATH NOTICE

ODILIA COMPETENTE ESPINAS

of Legazpi City, Tiwi, Albay

lies in state at St. Raphael Parish,
Legazpi City.

Interment will be announced later.

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Acsat's BS Nursing graduates: 100% board passers

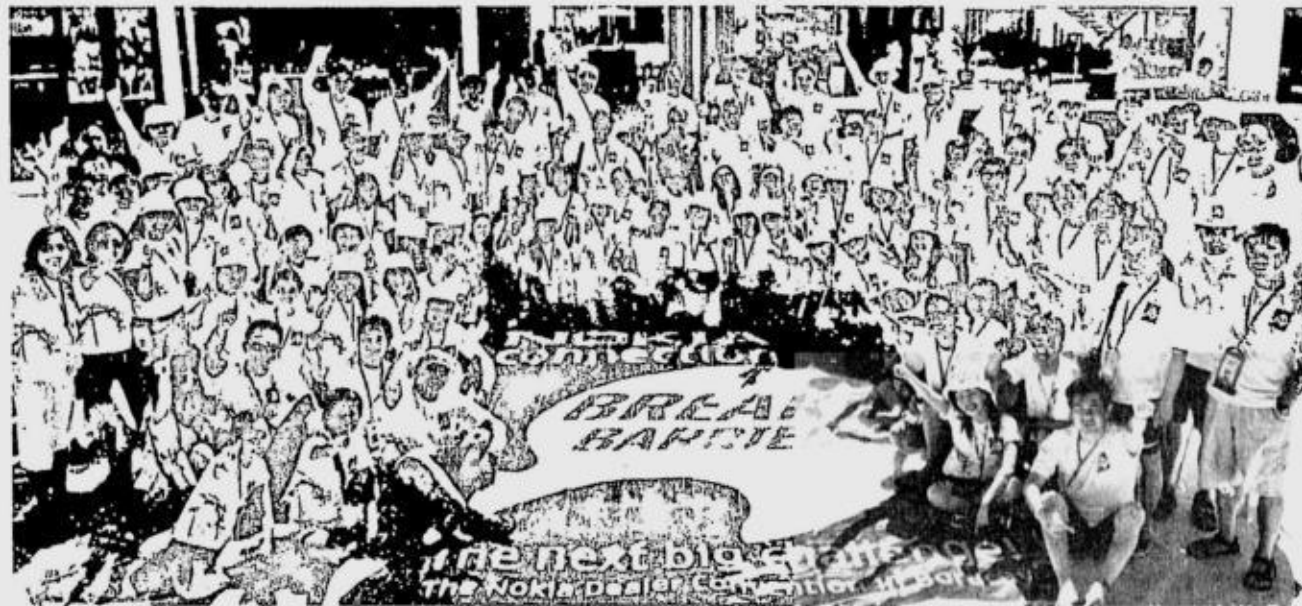
THE ASIAN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND Technology (Acsat) has reached new heights once again this time in the field of sciences - the very first batch of graduates from their College of Nursing are 100 percent board passers in the nursing licensure exams held last June 2007.

The Acsat College of Nursing is truly on the rise having heard all the cheers and greetings of congratulations to its first takers who all deserved to passed with grace not to mention the pride for their very own Alma Mater. In the words of one of the board passers, "Preparing for the board exam is a holistic process, not a month's review will keep you confident. The Acsat College of Nursing faculty helped us a lot in our academic years especially the critical one, our 4th year. We all did what has to be done, from the physical conditioning to the mind setting and emotional rearing. And yes, it pays to know that your name is right there on the newspaper, ready for the world to see, yes I did it, yes I

am now worthy to be called a Registered Nurse. As I come back to my Alma Mater, with a smile on my face, gratitude in my heart and with so much pride to say, Acsat is my school of success!"

It really shows that Acsat takes full responsibility in all aspects of their students' requirements by meeting the demands of quality education, giving them only the best qualified professors, competent clinical instructors with the best available training and related learning experience with their affiliate institutions.

Having the foundation as a computer and technology school for over three decades, Acsat has already the edge in producing globally competent qualified health care professionals. With the vision of being a leader institution of choice dedicated to the success of its graduates, Acsat is geared towards quality education and academic excellence creating a true legacy of success and this 100 percent board passing rate proves it.



NOKIA STRENGTHENS TIES WITH DEALER NETWORK

Nokia recently held its dealer convention in luxe beach getaway Discovery Shores in Boracay that brought together its many dealers and distributors from all over the country. The event was held to strengthen the ties that bind Nokia and its dealers and distributors as well as unveil Nokia's new mobile phone offerings and bigger reward system for its partner dealers and distributors. Around 138 people who are part of Nokia's two major distributors and 52 dealers located from north Luzon to south Mindanao joined the team-building activities during the convention. Awarding ceremonies

were also held to honor Nokia's top dealers for the first half of 2007. Memo Express received the National Platinum Award while Junrex Cellphone and Accessories from Cebu was given the National Gold Award. To add more excitement to the event, Nokia launched the Nokia 6500 Classic, Nokia 6500 Slide, Nokia N77, and the Nokia 5300 and Nokia 6300 in new and exciting colors. Seen at the event were vice president, CMO sales of Nokia Asia Pacific Mauro Montanaro, Nokia Philippines general manager William Hamilton-Whyte, and retail and distribution head Gerard Yusay.



GERMALIN ENTERPRISE ELEVATED TO HALL OF FAME

Germalin Enterprise Inc was elevated to the hall of fame being the recipient for four consecutive years of PAL Domestic Cargo's Diamond Award, and the first recipient of Hall of Fame under the Diamond Category. Shown receiving the award are Mr and Mrs Antonio Feliciano, its president and vice president respectively. Flanking them are top executives of PAL, namely (from

left): Mario Pangan, manager, domestic cargo sales; Enrique Javier, vice president, sales; Jaime Bautista, president and chief operating officer; Henry So Uy, EVP commercial group and executive assistant to the chair and CEO, Andrew Huang, SVP finance and chief financial officer; Emilio Yu, special assistant to the chair and CEO and Edmundo de Luna, SAVP, cargo sales.

PHILTOWN SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH PAG-IBIG

Philtown Properties together with Pag-ibig Fund, makes it easier for prospective buyers and residents to own Philtown's newest masterpiece, the WH Taft Residences. This P480M agreement between Philtown and Pag-ibig allows Philtown to tap Pag-ibig Funds vast resources through the company's Program for the Development of Medium/High Rise Condominium Building (MHRB). Seen here in photo sealing the agreement are (from left, sitting) Philtown's CEO Eleuterio Coronel; Pag-ibig Fund's President and CEO lawyer Romero Quimbo; Pag-ibig Fund's VP for wholesale lending group engineer Juanito Eje; (from left, standing) Philtown's consultant for corporate planning Ricardo Lorayes;



Philtown's SVP for operations Jose Asuncion Jr; Philtown's SVP for sales and marketing Christopher Vergara; Pag-ibig Fund's VP for loans origination group Rafael Odes Abano; and Pag-ibig Fund's special assistant to the President and CEO, lawyer Roberto Goan. For more information, you may call 526-1898, 818-2330, 818-1723 to 24, 0917-8536539, e-mail sales@philtown.net or visit www.philtown.net.

INAUGURATION OF MELENCIO DENTAL CLINIC

The new dental clinic of Dr. Monette del Rosario-Melencio, which was inaugurated last Sept. 1 is located at Lot. 9, Blk 17 Dahlia Avenue, West Fairview Park Subdivision, Fairview, Quezon City. Dr. Melencio specializes in orthodontics, cosmetic and general dentistry. Rev. Fr. Jerome Rosalinda with Barangay officials Dominador Albano and Ralph Dulay graced the occasion.



BONAVILLE SUBDIVISION GROUNDBREAKING

Officials of the Pag-ibig Fund recently led the groundbreaking ceremonies for Bonaville Subdivision, which will soon rise in Barrio Rizal in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija. Bonaville Subdivision has a total land area of 49,950 square meters that will make available



a total of 186 saleable units, benefiting government and private employees in Nueva Ecija. Shown during the groundbreaking are (from left): landowner Evangelina C. Baltao; Pag-ibig Malolos branch manager engineer Bayani C. Garcia; Muñoz Mayor Nestor L. Alvarez; Pag-ibig trustee Rosemarie Adjawie; and Pag-ibig vice president for North Luzon operations lawyer Vilma Q. Flores.



FILIPINOS HOPEFUL IN THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Last weekend (Sept 8 and 9), the Philippine Men's Dragon Boat Team were declared the champion out of 15 teams (mainly from Thailand, United States, Singapore, Hong Kong, Cambodia and Macau) at the International and Thal Long Boat Race. They bested the Thailand team in the finals (650 meters race), winning two out of three races. This is a good year for the Philippine Dragon Boat Team as they

were also Champions in Macau and China dragon boat races held last June. After the remarkable victories of the Philippine Men's Dragon Boat Team, the team is hopeful to win Gold in the 8th IDBF World Dragon Boat Racing Championships scheduled on September 19 to 23 at the Sydney International Regatta Course. For more information, please visit www.pdbf.com or write to phildragonboat@yahoo.com.

HP Toyrama Contest

HP PHILIPPINES KICKS OFF A UNIQUE CONTEST THAT INVITES DIGITAL animators from the Philippines and all across Asia Pacific to create, design, and direct short animated skits using high-performance workstations and graphics tools. Christened the HP Toyrama Contest, this online competition developed by Arc Worldwide Singapore challenges the best digital content creators in the region to create innovative and rich multimedia stop-motion animation starring five toy characters from Monsterism Island named Sancho, Farm Girl, Ranger, Jogger and Green, designed by cult toy designer Pete Fowler. The contest has two categories - the Open segment, for enthusiasts, amateurs or students with a passion for animation; and the Professional segment, for more proficient animators. Interested digital animators can log on to www.hptoyrama.com and create animated movies using the scenarios and backgrounds provided on the website. Developers can create movies, starring some or all of the toys, with up to 10 distinct scenes and under multiple categories. Completed animated movies can be uploaded for submission on the website. The contest is open to digital content creators in selected Asia Pacific countries. It is now open till Nov. 9.

Experience green tea redefined at Starbucks

TREAT YOURSELF TO A NEW WAY OF EXPERIENCING GREEN TEA through Starbucks Green Tea Latte. Made with the finest Japanese Matcha (green tea) found in other Starbucks Green Tea beverages, the Green Tea Latte is a delicious blend of premium quality matcha green tea, made with a hint of sweetness and fresh steamed milk. Matcha is made by grinding select Japanese green tea leaves into a fine powder and is traditionally used in Japanese tea pouring ceremonies. It is the lowest calorie latte beverage on the Starbucks menu and contains as much antioxidants as an equal amount of orange juice. What better way to warm up this season, reminisce on the good things in life and the connections you've made than to sit in a comfortable couch and sipping a Green Tea Latte. Enjoy this green tea tradition with a modern twist from Sept. 11 until Nov. 5.

'Musmos' photo exhibit at The Podium

EVERY YEAR THE NUMBER OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH CHILDREN increases due to several reasons. One is poverty and second is child labor. In accordance to this issue, an exhibit entitled "Musmos" is expected to create an awareness campaign that will touch the hearts of many Filipinos. In collaboration with Podium, Goldilocks, Delifrance and Canon Philippines, Entrepreneurial Management of University of Asia and the Pacific class of EB batch 2010 would like you to witness their photo exhibit entitled "Musmos" on Sept. 22-24, at The Podium. The people behind this endeavor look forward to clearly deliver the message of the campaign even after the exhibit.

Parkinson's Support Group of the Phils forum

THE PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP OF THE PHILIPPINES (PSGP) Foundation will be holding a meeting on Sept. 23, at 12 p.m. at the 14th floor auditorium of the Cathedral Heights Building Complex (CHBC) South Tower of St. Luke's Medical Center. The meeting is free and open to the public, and is being sponsored by Valeant Pharmaceuticals and St. Luke's. For the current meeting, procedures before, during and after deep brain stimulation surgery will be discussed in treating advanced Parkinson's disease, dystonia, Lubag, tics, Essential tremor, and other neurological disorders. Lecturer will be Dr. Virgilio Gerald H. Evidente, neurologist and movement disorders specialist, and director of the Deep Brain Stimulation surgical program of the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA. The lecture will be followed by an open forum. For more information, interested parties can contact the PSGP at (02)631-1531 or the Movement Disorders Center of St. Luke's at (02) 727-5552.

Fitness First gears up for Body Combat

FITNESS FIRST, THE PREMIER GLOBAL FITNESS COMPANY TAKES FITNESS to the extreme with the forthcoming fitness challenge called "Body Combat, The Main Event" on Oct. 7, Sunday NBC Tent at the Fort in Taguig City. The event will be a culminating sequel of previous Body Combat competitions and hopes to gather not just club members but other fitness enthusiasts in an aim to foster sportsmanship and camaraderie as integral components of a fun and healthy lifestyle. Winners of "Body Combat, The Main Event" will receive a Moxx motorcycle and a wide selection of apparel, watches and gift certificates from various restaurants and shopping outlets.

2007 UPCBA Alumni Homecoming

THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines will be holding its Annual Alumni Homecoming on Sunday, Dec. 2, at the College of Business Administration Building, UP Diliman from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Honoree Jubilarians for this year are the following: Golden 1957, Sapphire 1962, 1967 Coral, 1972 Pearl, 1977 and Silver 1982. The College will also honor the classes of the 70s (1970-1979), 1987, 1992, 1997 and 2002. All 2007 CPA Examination passers are also invited to attend this occasion. Registration fee is P600 (includes lunch), first come first served. For further information, please call 929-7991 and look for Zike Baoy or Cora Manalang or send an e-mail to erlinda.echanis@up.edu.ph or cba@up.edu.ph.

National Quality Forum

THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM, ORGANIZED ANNUALLY BY the Philippine Society for Quality Inc., will showcase big, medium and small-sized companies who have set themselves apart either through out-of-the-box strategies or doing ordinary things extraordinarily. Listen to stories and insights from Go Negosyo guru Joey Concepcion as well as from big companies, including Pfizer (workforce engagement), Medical City (patient care), Microsoft and PLDT (information technology). Balance that off with

the business models of SMEs like Marinduque Dell, Gardenia, Ng Khai Development Corporation and Pandayan Bookstore. Find out about new concepts and the latest continuous improvement approaches: Blue Ocean Strategy (developing new market spaces to propel sales); Lean Manufacturing, Innovation and Quality Culture, Product Packaging, and Personal Finance Management. These and more are what you can expect in this year's National Quality Forum on Oct. 11-12 at the Hotel Inter-continental Manila. Call the PSQ Office at 899-5925 or e-mail psq@pldttdsl.net.

Bank of Makati leads the way at 51

BANK OF MAKATI MAINTAINS ITS TOP POSITION AS THE COUNTRY'S biggest rural bank as it marks its 51st year on Sept. 22. Living up to its mission of helping people optimize their savings and gain access to business capital, Bank of Makati has expanded and refined its range of products and services over the last two years. It offers investment and deposit products with higher interest rates of 4 percent per annum on Regular Savings and Kidz Savers; and 5 percent to 10.5 percent per annum on Time and Special Savings Deposits. BOM also offers business loans to small and medium enterprises, housing loans, and contracts to sell financing facility for home developers, in addition to its core products of personal and microfinance loans. Bank of Makati customers enjoy longer banking hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays to Fridays and 9 a.m. to 12nn on Saturdays.

MCU 7th Subspecialty Post Graduate Course

THE DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS OF THE MANILA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY shall hold its 7th Subspecialty Post Graduate Course entitled as "Interdisciplinary Approach to Total Pediatric Health Care Series 3" from Oct. 1 and 2 at the MAB Hall, Philippine Heart Center. The course main objective is to provide updates on the most common medico-nursing concerns in the field of pediatric neurology, developmental pediatrics, cardiology and infectious disease. To enhance the participants' skills in fast assessment and recognition of conditions warranting immediate management. To further strengthen in the performance of common pediatric procedures. Registration fee is P1,500. For more information call Ruth Atibula, MD or Any Pedia, residents at numbers 363-6406, 0917-8018850, 0921-4305820.

A chocolaity-fun Sunday at Glorietta

ON SEPT. 23, DON'T LET YOUR LITTLE ONES MISS THIS YEAR'S MOST exciting trip to the Magnolia Choco Land! Magnolia Chocolat has concocted a whole day of fun-packed activities at the Glorietta Activity Center where great adventures abound to challenge the body and mind of young trekkers. Inside the Magnolia Choco Land, one can basically find all the elements close to a child's heart -- stories, coloring books, pictures, games and prizes -- made even more special with the company of new friends. Taking the trip to the Magnolia Choco Land is easy. Kids whose schools were previously visited by the Chocolat Bus simply need to present their Golden Tickets to get inside. Those who haven't participated in the Chocolat Bus School tour can also participate. Just purchase a Magnolia Chocolat back-to-school pack from the pre-selling area in the mall in exchange of the Golden Ticket. Parents are also welcome to join and bond with their kids inside the Magnolia Choco Land.

PSSM 4th symposium 'Updates in Sleep'

ACCIDENTS ACTUALLY RANK AS THE 4TH LEADING CAUSE OF MORTALITY in the Philippines and sleep disorders may be an unsuspected cause. Cardiac disease, which is the leading cause of death, is also linked with snoring and sleep apnea. These issues along with insomnia, jet lag, bangungut, pediatric sleep problems, medical and surgical treatment approaches will be tackled in the 4th symposium of the Philippine Society of Sleep Medicine entitled "Updates in Sleep." This will be held at the Edsa Shangri-La on Sept. 21 to 22. For inquiries and pre-registration, please contact (02)727-5559 (Manny) or (02)749-9760 (Katie). Registration is limited to 150 participants.

Jus' 4 Kids Plus combines CGF and Taurine

CGF OR CHLORELLA GROWTH FACTOR PROMOTES PHYSICAL GROWTH in children and Taurine is an amino acid that helps in the development of the brain and nervous system of children. These two nutrients when put together make up the most potent combination which spurs growth in the physical and mental faculties of children. Sydenham Laboratories Inc has effectively combined CGF and Taurine in its new variant, Jus' 4 Kids Plus to ensure that children get the best health benefits from this delicious beverage. It is also fortified with Vitamins A, C, E, B1, B3, Zinc, and Iodine - micronutrients that help improve the growth and immune system of children. Unlike other juices which use artificial flavors, Jus' 4 Kids Plus is made from natural fruit juices and it is the only one with CGF and Taurine. Jus' 4 Kids has been approved by the Department of Health, through its Sangkap Pinoy Seal Program, and the Bureau of Food and Drug. Jus' 4 Kids Plus is available in 250 ml Tetra Brick at leading supermarkets including SM, Robinsons, Puregold, Shopwise, Waltermart, South, Landmark, Cherry and Ever and other secondary outlets.

Goodwill Bookstore 70th anniversary sale

CELEBRATE GOODWILL BOOKSTORE'S 70TH ANNIVERSARY! FROM AUG. 30 up to Sept. 30, Goodwill Gateway, Legarda, UP Manila and Bridges Bookstore-Ayala will be conducting the "Big, Big 70th year Pre-Anniversary Sale!" Book Shoppers will enjoy up to 70 percent discount on Goodwill and Bridges' selected titles: paperbacks, trade, specialty books, children's books and reference books. What's more, a minimum single receipt purchase worth P500 at Bridges Bookstore-Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, during the sale, entitles shoppers to an earth-friendly Bridges Bookstore tote bag for free, while supplies last. Shop now at Bridges Bookstore-Ayala and all Goodwill Bookstore outlets.

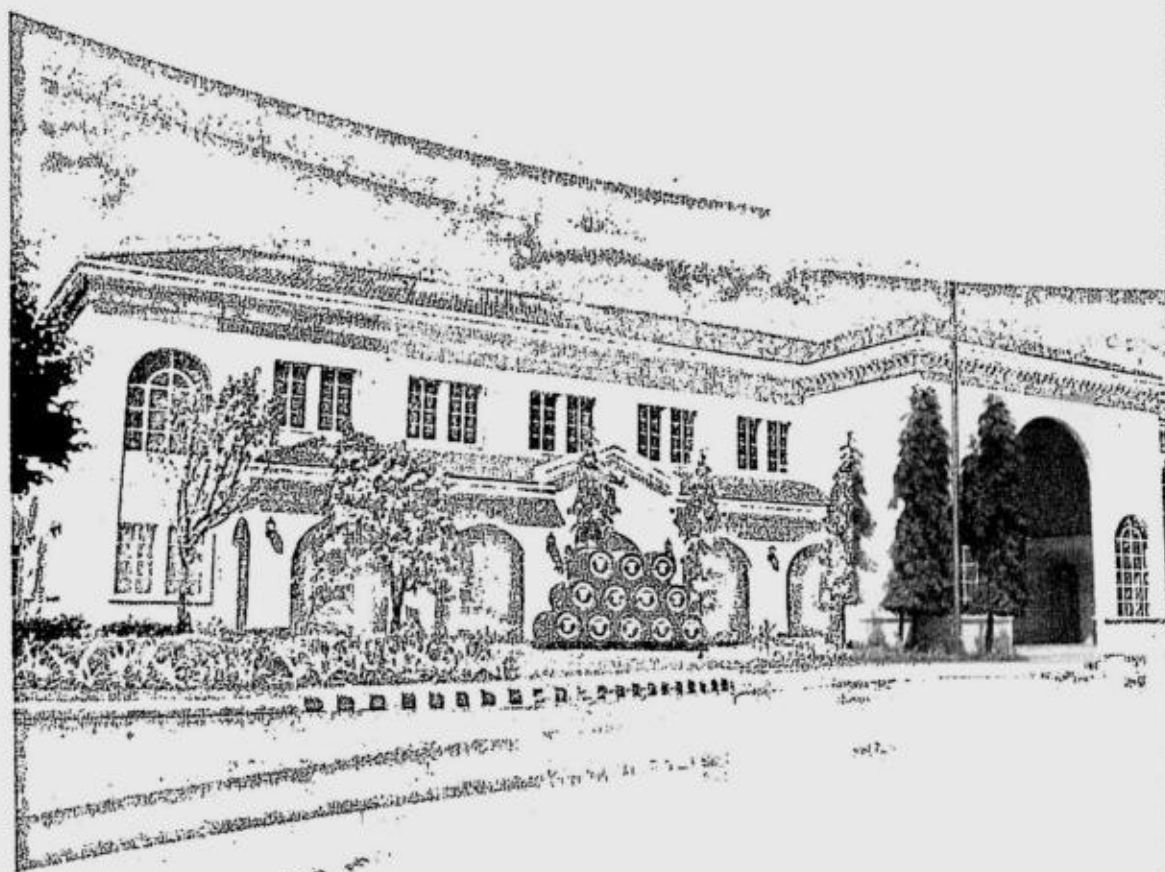
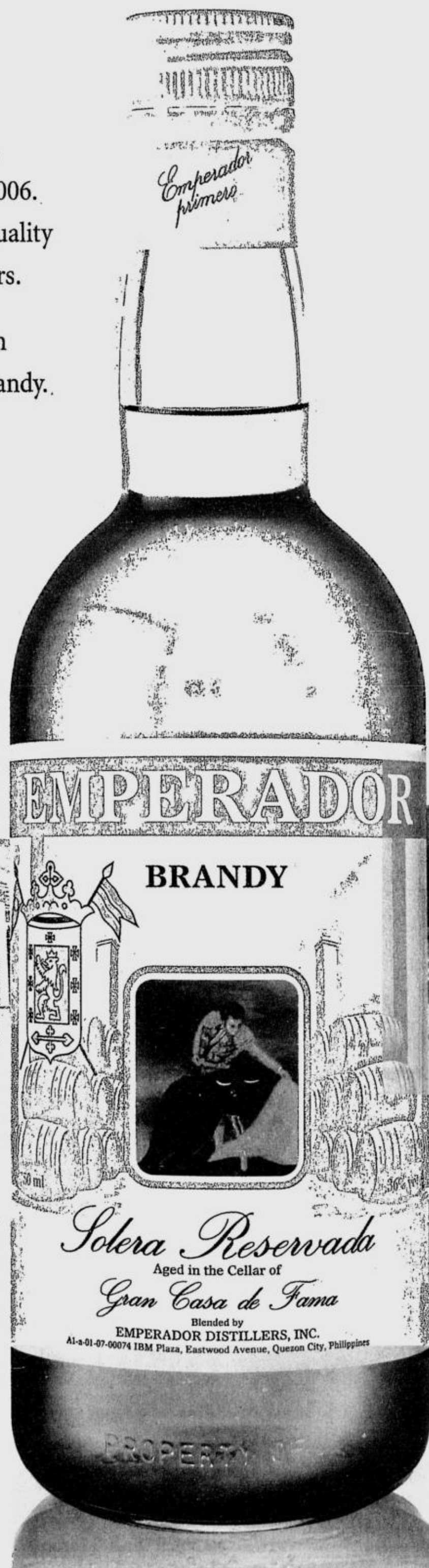
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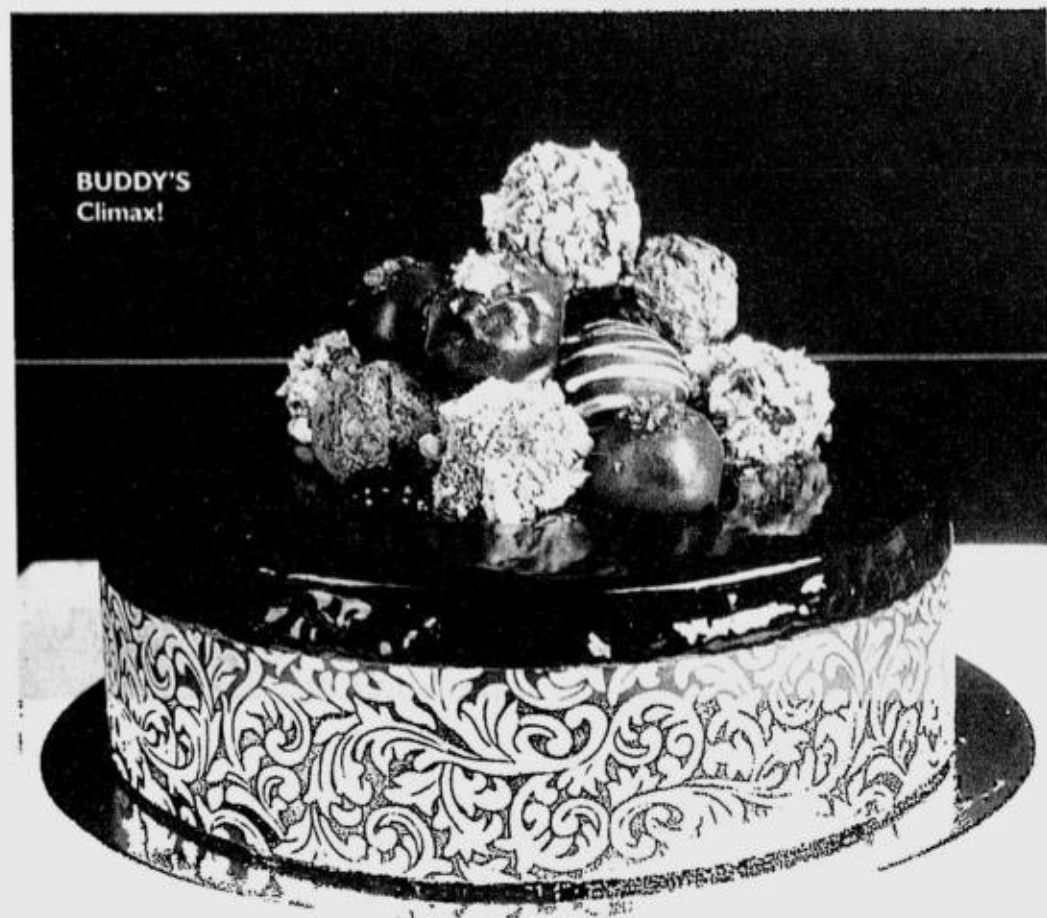
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Chef Buddy Trinidad's Lemon Passion Fruit Meringue rocks; his Mango Napoleon is excellent and his Tahitian Vanilla Crème Brûlée, the absolute fave of the stars

Sweets from a Buddy; so sorry for lapses

STEVEN SPIELBERG, ROD Stewart, Sylvester Stallone, Madonna, Michael Eisner and Steve Tisch... *Kilala ka nila?*

Ako? 'Di rin nila kilala! But I sure know someone they know. My good friend, chef Buddy Trinidad!

Buddy was a marvel during his 14-year stint in America working for restaurants of great fame, such as Michaels, Mortons, Noa Noa, Tryst, The Peninsula Beverly Hills and Stars.

Under Peter Morton of Hard Rock Café, he headed a team that churned out such grand desserts for the Morton's Annual Oscar Awards Parties. And under the same, he played a major role as part of the opening crew for the now-famous Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

His entry to the sweet world of food came quite by surprise. On his third year of Sports Medicine at the University of the Philippines, he realized his heart was elsewhere, his passion for baking superseding his love for sports. So off to sunny California he went to follow his heart.

Buddy is back with a vengeance, having been instrumental in winning the gold for our country at this year's Hofex in Hong Kong.

Apart from this glorious feat, he opened Park Avenue Desserts, making all his sweet masterpieces, once only served to and savored by Hollywood bigwigs, available to us common folk.

His genuine talent was lauded by the Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle and US Magazine. *Iba talaga ang Pinoy!* And Buddy Trinidad is no exception.

Indeed, this man makes life oh... so sweet! If you like lemon, try his Lemon Passion Fruit Meringue. It rocks! His Mango Napoleon is excellent! And if you want to "level" with the likes of Rod Stewart, Sylvester Stallone and Madonna, *maski sa cake man lang*, get his Tahitian Vanilla Crème Brûlée, the absolute fave of the stars!

Trinidad has also developed a whole line of sugar-free desserts and has made his whole Hofex repertoire, the one that won the gold, available. Call 8346636

Can I have a brownie recipe? *Sana* I can make it my home business.

MARILU

Who better to give it to you than the man of the hour himself, chef Buddy Trinidad!

May your kids love this recipe and may your brownie empire flourish!

Brownies

- 12 oz, bittersweet chocolate
- 100 g butter
- ½ c each water and sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1½ c flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 12 oz each chocolate and walnuts
- Combine chocolate, butter, water and sugar in double boiler over low heat.
- Whisk in eggs.
- Add flour, salt.
- Fold in chopped chocolate, nuts.
- Pour into pan.
- Bake in 350-degree oven for 20 minutes.
- Cool, slice and serve.

SWEETS/C3

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras



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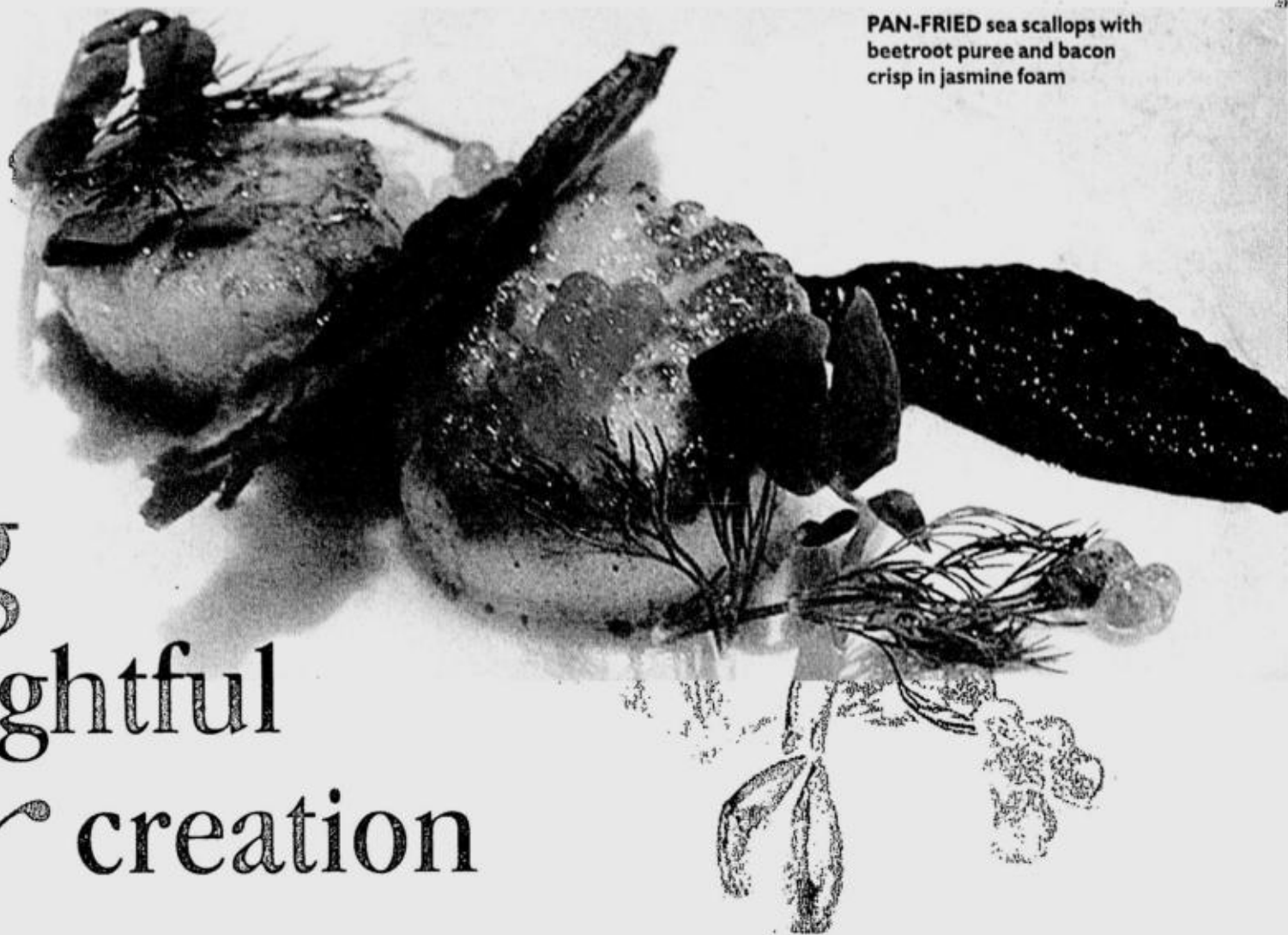
Full Tank



WARM chocolate fondant with ginger ice cream



PAN-FRIED sea scallops with beetroot puree and bacon crisp in jasmine foam



Fine dining becomes a delightful exploration & creation

By Alex Y. Vergara

GOURMANDS CAN LOOK FORWARD to the Tivoli's newest offerings that will allow them to either go a bit wild and creative in their choices or to stick to a relatively conventional but equally

satisfying seven-course meal.

Both options are made possible by executive chef Thomas Wenger.

In its efforts to excite its diners' palates continuously, Mandarin Oriental's continental fine-dining restaurant recently introduced the seven-course

Chef's Tasting Menu and the more complicated but equally filling Create Your Own Menu.

Excluding the coffee or tea and hot vanilla soufflé to cap a tasty meal, the Chef's Tasting Menu, as its number implies, consists of amuse bouche, potted foie gras terrine, creamy lobster bisque, pan-fried quail breast, refreshing sorbet, potato-crusted halibut fillet and rebblechon cheese.

The dishes, except, of course, for the sorbet, come with the tastiest and most imaginatively mixed sauces and creams like warm apple-celery puree and orange brandy sauce (for the foie gras), and tomato-tarragon salsa and saffron ice cream (for the bisque).

The quail breast, on the other hand, is served with sage-infused potato gnocchi and grilled cep mushroom on the side, while the halibut is further enhanced with leek and white chocolate fondue, wild rice and keta caviar. The delightful rebblechon cheese is drenched in warm walnut sauce.

The dining odyssey, however, is not just about food. Four of the seven items on the menu are paired with specific New World wines—from Australia to California—especially selected for the

At Tivoli, you can either follow the chef's advice or have your own menu

occasion by restaurant manager Stephan Wieprich. The wines may vary according to season and the items on the menu.

Though a growing number of Filipinos are willing to enjoy a seven-course lunch or dinner, the portions are sized just right to keep them from feeling stuffed or sleepy halfway through the gastronomic experience.

"Its popularity comes from the fact that it's an exclusive seven-course menu," says Wieprich. "The advantage [for the diner] is to have a beautiful seven-course menu, including four wines. It's really the best deal in town. The ingredients of the dishes and the virtues of each wine have to match each other in flavor."

A menu inclusive of wines can set a diner back by P3,480, while a menu without the wines costs P2,880.

For more adventurous and hands-on diners, the Tivoli offers a more varied fare. They can create their own menus by choosing from, hold your breath,

five appetizers, five soups, four warm starters, four cheese courses and six desserts.

The main courses are grouped into fish and meat, each group offering four choices. Guests can choose from three dining options: three-course menu (P2,180); four-course menu (P2,380); and five-course menu (P2,680).

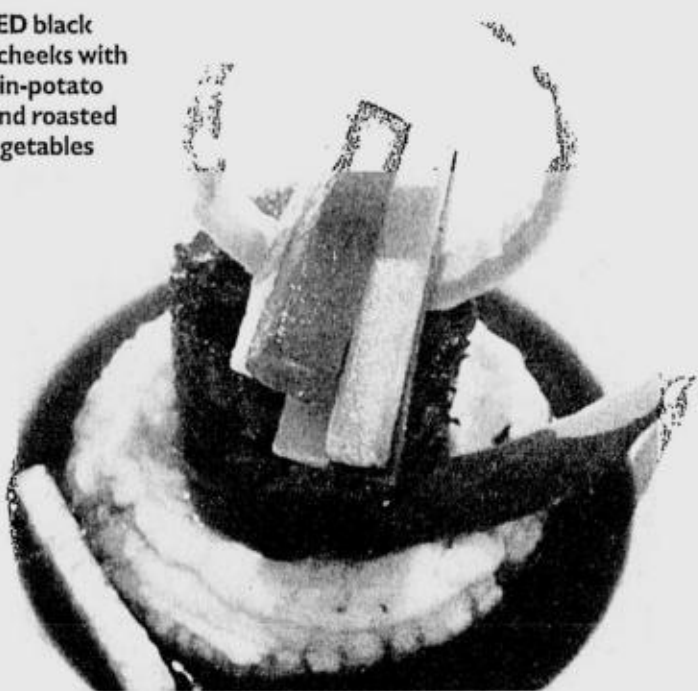
Wieprich says most of the Tivoli's diners are regulars and they usually go for the three-course menu.

"It's all about enjoying themselves," he says. "Many of our guests know what they like. Not a few love to try new dishes, which they might not be able to do in other restaurants."

Filipinos, he observes, cannot seem to get enough of the potted foie gras terrine, oven-roasted rack of lamb and sweet wine marinated Roquefort cheese.

Other popular choices include creamy lobster bisque, pan-fried scallops and mille-feuille of pan-fried sea bass. For dessert, nothing beats the popularity of warm chocolate fondant.

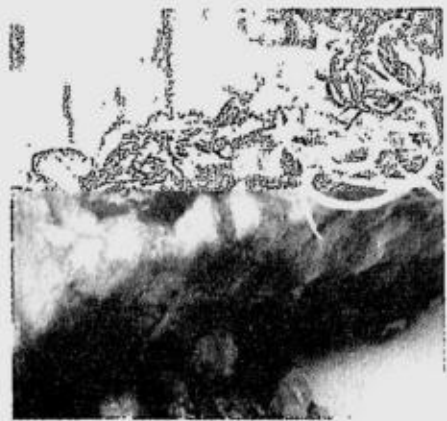
BRAISED black wagyu cheeks with pumpkin-potato mash and roasted root vegetables



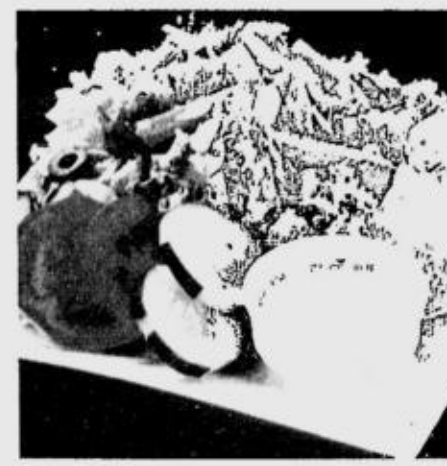
DINING OUT

Steak-ing a claim

STEAK MD SERVES STEAKS IN DIFFERENT flavors to appeal to varying tastes. Available are spicy "Atomic Rub," sweet and spicy "Ang Charub," garlic-rich "Heart Rub" and buttery "Build Me Up Butter Rub" at affordable prices. Steak MD has branches at Creekside Square



TROPEZZ restaurant and bar at 2/L, Greenbelt 3 features a fusion of French and Asian cuisine. Offered are Caviar de Ifugao, shredded tilapia with cream cheese with melba toast; Crab Attack, little crab croquettes with curry powder and bechamel sauce; Connecting Flight, two chicken lollipops facing each other end to end; Belly Mucho, slow-roasted pork belly glazed with mandarin orange and hoisin sauce; and Fish Out of Water, Pinoy fish kinilaw soaked in vinegar and coconut cream topped with chicharon and camote chips. Call 7574484.



Building, Tomas Morato, QC and Paseo de Sta. Rosa 3, Greenfield Development Park, Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Call 4487845.

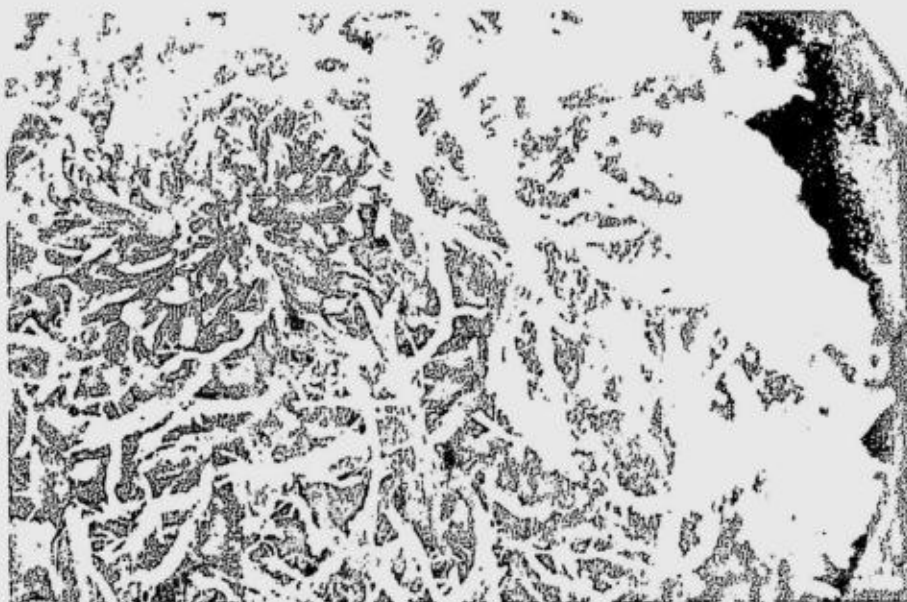
TERIYAKI BOY presents Kushiya, the latest addition to its extensive menu consisting of skewered morsels of tuna, beef, chicken, pork, lapu-lapu and lka (squid) served with regular or spicy sauce. An order comes with three sticks at P65-P75. The new Kushiya is available in all 31 outlets, including the newest at Santana Grove, Parañaque.

HULA HULA Seafood and Barbecue House offers Island Barbecue feast, a choice of barbecue grilled items with two side dishes. Visit its branches at Shangri-La Street Scape, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong (tel. 9103218) and Westgate, Filinvest City (7712291 or 7712289).

SIZZLIN' Pepper Steak, a Japanese steakhouse at TriNoma Mall, offers Yakimiku or Rib-eye Steak and Gyu-Saikoro Burger Steak. It also serves salad, pasta, seafood and chicken dishes. Call 9167040.

LI LI, Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila's Cantonese restaurant, presents chef Choi's exotic Double-Boiled Soups this month. Herbal soups include Double-Boiled Crocodile Soup with Black Chicken and Herbs, Double-Boiled Quail Soup

SEATTLE'S Best Coffee now offers an all-day breakfast menu: pancakes with bacon strips or sausages, omelettes with ham and cheese, sausage and mushrooms with French toast; pasta; sandwiches; and salads. Their All-Vegetable Salad (left) has a choice of four dressings. Available at Seattle's Best Coffee branches on Tomas Morato, Caltex Slex Southbound, Rockwell, Harrison Plaza Village Square, SM Megamall, Binondo, Festival Mall, Bonifacio High Street and TriNoma.



WORLDTOPPS offers rice toppings inspired by the different culinary regions of the world. Mediterranean dishes on the menu are Paella and Bangus Salpicado, for example. Not to be missed are Filipino-inspired toppings, such as the Toppsilog and (above) the best-selling Adobo Flakes, a bowl of steaming white rice crowned with strands of crunchy dried pork adobo. Worldtopps is at 3/F, Cyber and Fashion Mall, Eastwood City (0917-8EWCITY).

with Asia Moon Scallops and Ginseng, and Double-Boiled Turtle Soup with Aged Hen and Agaricus Mushrooms. Call 2451234.

MARIO'S now offers free Wi-Fi courtesy of eYellowPages from 7 a.m.-10 a.m. daily with a minimum order of P175. Thursday night is Prime Rib Night and there is a 30-percent discount on the house wine. Mario's also has new House Specials that include Cajun Platter (appetizers); a choice between Chicken Oriental or Pomelo Salad; three choices for main courses—Tuscan Platter (trio of beef tenderloin, cajun prawn and fish fillet); US



Angus Blade Steak with Merlot-Mushroom Sauce or Chilean Seabass with mango-pineapple salad. Mario's Baguio is an ideal venue for a wedding reception. Mario's is at Tomas Morato corner Scout Gandia in QC and on Upper Session Road, Baguio City. Call 4153887, 3720360 or 074-4424241.

MARCO Polo Plaza Cebu celebrates Oktoberfest Oct. 12-14. Delight in three nights of beer-drinking and enjoy grilled sausages, a full spread of German dishes, salads and desserts. There will also be games in various booths. Call 8454574 and 032-2531111 in Cebu; e-mail mppplaza@marcopolohotels.com.

FISH & CO.'s offers Jap in a Pan new menu until Sept. 30. Crisp Maki Platter (left) is a platter of fried maki and dory fillet with fired cheddar-cheese stuffing and served with black sea and pacific sauce. Ginza Salmon is baked salmon with spices and homemade balsamic dressing with veggies on the side. Prawn Miso Pasta flavors the pasta sauce with Japanese miso. Tuna Salad is grilled tuna on a bed of assorted greens tossed with homemade dressing. Available at Greenbelt 3, Shangri-La Edsa Mall and SM Mall of Asia.

Special tasting menu

A SPECIAL DEGUSTATION EVENING will mark the first anniversary on Sept. 25 of Mezzaluna, one of Serendra's signature restaurants at the Bonifacio Global City.

Since Mezzaluna is also a showcase for some of the world's finest wines, the celebration will highlight selected vintages. Each dish in the five-course dinner will be paired with selections from distinguished European, Australian and American vineyards.

The degustation or tasting menu allows a diner to savor a restaurant's full range of talent and creativity. But portions are limited to allow the diner to savor fully the symphony of flavors, textures and aromas of each course.

Miguel trained for 10 years in award-winning Sydney restaurants.

Mezzaluna recently introduced a special lunch menu that gave a preview of its dinner courses.

Among the most popular lunch selections is a warm salad of USDA Angus Top Blade with roasted tomato, mushrooms and pine nuts in red-wine dressing. Also in demand is handmade saffron capellini tossed with prawns, tomatoes and parsley and a hint of chili.

Miguel changes the restaurant's menu every eight to 10 weeks depending on the produce in season.



CHEF Carlo Miguel

Sweets from a Buddy; so sorry for lapses

From page C1

May I request your list of the 10 best steakhouses in Metro Manila and their corresponding prices? The best steak I tasted was in New York during the mid-'90s. It was at Peter Luger in Brooklyn.

NONOY

'Noy, someone told me recently that Mamu's at The Fort serves steaks that taste like Peter Luger's.

Here are some of my favorites: Of course there's Melo's, Duo, Hyatt's Fire Place, Balducci's and Tsukiji for Wagyu Yakimiku. Haven't gone in a while but if I remember right, Old Manila. And there's Le Soufflé, Carpaccio, Bianca's!

Not quite 10 but excellent nonetheless.

Apology

My Sept. 6 column on mangosteen caused a stir.

I may have been silent but my heart has not been at peace. I had wanted to address this matter earlier but, as they say, everything happens at its own perfect time.

Let me set the record straight on this one. . . I have no excuses and I offer my humblest and sincerest apology for the error.

For the past four years, I have been doing Kitchen Rescue, a column that I never thought I'd have, one that came to

me quite by surprise. It is God's gift, not because I am good or worthy, but rather because He is good.

I have tried, to the best of my ability, to use it to bring the joys of the table to my readers, sharing all that I know, all that I discover and everything that brings me much happiness.

As I always say, KR is as much mine as it is yours.

Every single week, I try my utter best to write about what I think will excite you, of things to eat and the people behind them so their talents and contributions to the glorious world of food don't go by unnoticed.

Although I never claim to know ev-

erything, know that in every column, the best of me to you is all that I offer. Sometimes, though, my best is not good enough, and when I fall short and am less than perfect, I humbly ask for your forgiveness and your understanding.

To my readers, I thank you for sharing precious time with me. It continues to be my privilege and my honor to be read by you. I am truly humbled.

I am also grateful that you look out for me. I say this with no rancor in my heart, but if anything, with regret, knowing that I could have done much better.

To Market Man, I extend my apologies and my hand in friendship. I pray

that the good Lord continue to bless our pens, and with His help, may we together create more hearts that share the same love that we have—for good food.

Maraming salamat sa inyong pag-unawa.

Editor's note: In her column "The queen becomes an international star" (PDI, Sept. 6, 2007), Ms. Aspiras failed to attribute material she had sourced from the Internet and, through erroneous paraphrasing, she also inadvertently altered the meaning of a part of the original material.

E-mail the author at aspiras@inquirer.com.ph

Keep your refrigerator from looking like a disaster area

DOES YOUR REFRIGERATOR smell bad and the drinking water taste funny? Is it so cluttered you cannot find anything unless you take everything out?

Glad, the world leader in kitchen wraps and bags, offers tips to organize the refrigerator.

• Keep strong-smelling foods sealed in Glad Press N' Seal. The innovative product can be turned into a form-fitting seal to keep air out so food stays fresh longer. You can even have bags custom-made to suit your needs.

• Segregate fruits, vegetables, seafood and meat products. This makes it easier and faster to find things and prevents mixing of different.

• Keep raw meats, seafood and poultry in separate Glad Zipper Freezer Bags. The bags have a labeling strip. Thoroughly dry fruits and vegetables after rinsing and before storing. Excess moisture promotes spoilage. Glad Storage Bags are made of durable plastic with a secure seal to keep food fresher longer.

• Keep the ref tidy and uncluttered by using containers that are not too bulky. Odd-shaped

items like pizza will stay fresh in Glad Cling Wrap and Glad Press N' Seal.

• Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours to keep them from going bad. Cover bowls and containers using Glad Cling Wrap or aluminum foil to seal in the flavors and aroma of the food. Throw away doubtful leftovers.

• Juices from marinating meat, poultry and seafood can leak and make a mess in the ref. Use Glad Storage Bags that not only seal well but also follow the contours of the food better than bowls or plastic containers.

• When cleaning the fridge, take out removable shelves and wash properly. Use a cleaning solution or baking soda and warm water to clean compartments. Keep the exterior clean by wiping it with a damp cloth or a detergent solution to remove stains. Dry the surface after cleaning. Keep nasty odors off by dabbing vanilla extract on a piece of cotton; place it in the middle compartment of your refrigerator to deodorize the appliance, or leave an open box of baking soda to absorb odors.

Glad wraps and bags are available in leading supermarkets nationwide.

chili's What's Hot on the Menu at Chili's:

Wanna try something totally new? Get off the beaten gastronomic path with Chili's Chicken Club Tacos. Not your ordinary tacos, these are 3 soft flour tortillas each filled with mexquite chicken, chopped crispy bacon, sliced tomatoes, mixed cheeses, lettuce, and chipotle-ranch dressing. A unique and refreshingly light twist to the tacos that we know, it comes with Pueblo rice and black beans. You may change your side dishes to a combination of homestyle fries or sweet corn on the cob. Share or have it for yourself, however way you like it you're guaranteed a unique and flavorful experience.

For your sweet tooth, try the new Caramel Apple Tart. Skillet-baked moist apple tart topped with vanilla ice cream, warm caramel sauce and cinnamon. This is dessert heaven!

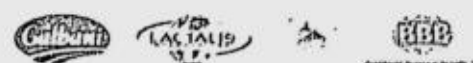
Want more? Go to your nearest Chili's outlet and experience fun and fresh dishes, appetizers, make for a flavorful dining experience with family & friends. Visit Chili's at Greenbelt 2, Makati, Southeast Greenbelt, for a fun-filled meal.

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HENY SISON
CULINARY SCHOOL

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

October 1 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (classroom A) **BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS** by: Henry Sison "Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. P1,500

October 1 (Monday) 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY RECIPES** by: Henry Sison "Dark Fruitcake, White Fruitcake, Walnut Torte, Rum-Raisin Walnut Cheesecake, Festive Cookie Bar & Prune Bar. P1,500

October 2-3 (Tuesday-Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **CAKE DECORATING COURSE** by: Henry Sison "Learn the basics of cake decorating using color, size, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping, clowns & booties. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. Full participation. P4,000

October 4-5 (Thursday-Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! CHINESE BANQUET** by: Chef Katherine Sion, restaurant owner (Ding Hao & Fat Kat restaurant), caterer and an expert in Chinese cuisine 2 days hands on session where you taught on how to prepare and taste a full Chinese banquet and learn also how to set it up in style. Please bring in aprons. Recipes: Assorted Cold Cuts (White Chicken/Seaweed/Century Eggs/Pork Cuts/Baked Shrimp), Fish Lips Soup, 2 Kinds of a Platter (a) Shrimp Ball with Chai Asparagus tips in the nest; (b) Fried Rolled Chicken Roll, Grilled Beef Rib Eye with Barbecue Sauce and Baked Crab with 8 Spices, Steamed Fish with Ham Bits and Leeks Cantonese Beef Noodle, Yang Chow Fried Rice and Fruit Platter. Reservation is Requested! P15, bring your own apron. P4,900

October 6 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! BREAKFAST AND BRUNCHES** by: Jacqueline H. Allice, owner of Ruzal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pony restaurant (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Petra's naturally green, global, gourmet) Recipes: Mango Lassi, banana Pancakes with Home Made Muscovado and Kesong Puti-Thyme Muffins, Ham & Cheese Scopes, Chocolate Pumpkin Loaf, Smoked Fish (tuna), cheese spread whole wheat toast, Frittata, Quiche Lorraine, Grilled Tomatoes, Kesong Puti, Tomato-Mango Salad, Organic Mixed Vegetables Salad with Vinaigrette. Reservation Requested! P1,900

October 6 (Saturday) 1:00 - 4:30 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! HEALTHY GOURMET - HOLIDAY TREATS AND BUFFET SPREADS** by: Jacqueline H. Allice Recipes: Chicken Liver Mousse, Carrot Coriander Soup, Fish Gougous with Dips, Boursin Tartlets, Roast Beef with Roasted Garlic, Beef Pepper and Carrots, Vegetable Crumble with Anchovies, Holiday Fruit Salad, Spiced Pears in Red Wine, Mango Bavarian Cream. Reservation Requested! P1,950

October 8 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! DIMSUM BAR** by: Chef Katherine Sion, Make your own Soma Wrapper Egg Noodles, Lumpia Wrapper, Vegan Soma, Pork Soma, Seafood Soma, Stir Fried Egg Noodle with 4 Mushrooms in Oyster Sauce, Dynamic Noodle Soup, Cuspa Wrapper, Vegan Filling, Kalih's Lumpia Filling. Reservation is Requested! P2,500

October 8 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **HEIRLOOM-2 RECIPES AND SIGNATURE CATERING DISHED MODULE** by: Chef Sam de Leon, Food Consultant, Stylist, Photographer, Caterer, Food demonstrator and Culinary Competition Events Consultant specializing in Basic & Classical Cookery, International & Asian Cuisine. The chef shares his part 2 heirloom recipes handed down from a long of Pampanago cooks from generation to generation. Recipes: Kare-Kare, Beef Kaldorita, Tanigue Steak, Lengua with Sauce Robert, Chicken Bakes and Tropical Fruit Salad P2,250

October 9 (Tuesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **MEAT PROCESSING I** by: Chef Vicki Villanueva, from Stars & Bizu, let Chef Vick share with you her wealth of knowledge and experience of patisseries and restaurant concepts, skills, techniques & operations. Open a rewarding all day dining (tapsilog) or home based business. Apply the new concepts, principles and techniques of making a Longanesa, Chorizo, Tocino, Corned Beef, Tapa, luncheon meat, Embolito from scratch. The preparation of Ice Tea, Achara and flavored rice, and lunch is included. Reservation is Requested! P2,800

October 10 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (classroom A) **JAPANESE RICE TOPPING** by: Chef Koichi Kondo, licensed cook from Shime Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants "Oyakodon (Chicken & Egg on Rice), Gyudon (Beef Bowl), Tendon (Tempura Bowl), Katsudon (Pork Cutlet Bowl), Soboro-don (Minced Chicken & Egg Bowl), Tori Teriyaki-don (Chicken Teriyaki). P1,700

October 10 (Wednesday) 1:30 - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) **SUSHI CLASS** by: Chef Koichi Kondo "Temaki-Zushi (Do-it Yourself Sushi Rolls), Bura-Zushi (Scattered Sushi), Inari-Zushi (Sushi Pockets), Futo-Maki Zushi (Thick-Rolled Sushi), Tekka-Maki (Hand-rolled Tuna Sushi), Kappa-Maki (Sea Cucumber Sushi) and California Maki. P1,700

October 11 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **THE ARTFUL CUPCAKE** by: Chef Jacqueline Ang-Po, Flavorful cupcakes with colorful designs. Learn how to bake, decorate and mix and match pretty cupcakes! Easy to make and easy to sell. Recipes: Classic yellow cupcakes with buttercream (different colors, designs and flavors), Chocolate cupcake with 7 minute frosting, Triple Chocolate Cupcake, White Chocolate Mocha, Lemon Meringue, Strawberries and Chocolate. Bonus Recipe: Sugar Free Cupcakes! P1,800

October 12 (Friday) 9:00 - 12:30 noon (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! CHOCOLATE INDULGENCE** by: Carrie Madrid, is a freelance Food Stylist catering to consumer and institutional companies. She was trained at The Culinary Institute of America, California Academy of Arts, and Henry Sison Culinary School and also worked for the San Miguel Culinary Center as a Products Application Specialist. Double your pleasure without doubling your efforts. Learn how to make a decadent treat. Easy, show-stopping desserts for the chocolate. "Chocolate Molten Cake, Chocolate Torte with Coffee Sauce, Triple Layer Brownies, Chocolate Truffle, Decadent White Chocolate Mousse and Coffee Panna Cotta with Chocolate Sauce P1,850

October 12 (Friday) 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) **PAELLA CLASS** by: Chef Ed Quinsion, is a seasoned master chef of Spanish origin, creator of Chef Ed's Restaurant at Salcedo Village, Makati City. He has also lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, The Nielsen Tower, the Member's Lounge of the Phil. Stock Exchange & the Subic Yacht Club "Paella Negra, Paella a la Montaña, Paella Catalana, Paella Sevillana (Vegetarian) and Paella Con Salsas Y Millones P1,800

October 13 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon (classroom A) **HEALTHY GOURMET - SOUTH BEACH DIET PHASE 1** by: Jacqueline H. Allice "This class is suitable for all people who want to be able to cook healthy dishes, lose weight considerably and people with dietary concerns such as diabetes, high blood pressure and other dietary restrictions. The class will guide you through the principles of healthy nutrition. South Beach Diet phase 1 "Swiss Pony Style" which uses locally available ingredients. Complete menu plans and recipes for 14 days of Phase 1. P1,850 plus P700 recipe booklet for Phase 1

October 13 (Saturday) 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! HEALTHY GOURMET - SOUTH BEACH DIET PHASE 1** by: Jacqueline H. Allice "This class is suitable for all people who want to be able to cook healthy dishes, lose weight considerably and people with dietary concerns such as diabetes, high blood pressure and other dietary restrictions. The class will guide you through the principles of healthy nutrition. South Beach Diet phase 1 "Swiss Pony Style" which uses locally available ingredients. Complete menu plans and recipes for 14 days of Phase 1. P1,850 plus P700 recipe booklet for Phase 1

October 15 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **BOTTLE UP I** by: Chef Juan Carlo Estagile, one of our school's home-grown chefs who has proven his mettle as Executive Chef of Mezzo Restaurant and Bar at Greenbelt 2, pastry consultant of Bakeshops and chef consultant to other multinational food brands. Putting up food for future enjoyment is a decidedly old-fashioned pursuit. Yet more and more cooks today are rediscovering it and even making a business out of it. In this course, you'll learn everything you need to know to bottle up ingredients for complete menu plans and recipes for 14 days of Phase 1. The outcome is sure to be a rainbow of

October 15 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **ITALIAN PIZZA WORKSHOP** by: Chef Vicki Villanueva Learn how to cure, package, cook and market you own ham and learn how to make pandesal. Recipes: Whole Wheat Pandesal, Special Egg-yolk Pandesal and Sydney's Pandesal, Chinese Style Ham, Chicken Ham, Sweet Ham and Momo Special X'mas Ham. Reservation is Requested! P3,000

October 17 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **OCTOBER FEAST** by: Chef Vivian Syyp, Private Chef/Caterer, AOS, Culinary Arts, with honors, The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York. Featuring: Cucumber and Sour Cream Salad, Roasted Potato Salad, home-made Baked Fruit Sandwiches (Bavarian & Sauerbraten cooked in Beer), Roast Pork Knuckles, and classic Bavarian Lob P2,000

October 18 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (classroom A) **TECHNIQUES OF FINE COOKING I** (Featuring Chicken) by: Chef Vicki Villanueva Hands-on preparation and cooking of chicken. Each student shall be assigned whole chicken to butcher and debone. Learn how to grill, roast, stew, fry, sauté, steam and make sauces. Recipes include: Chicken Gallantina, Chicken Cordon Bleu, Chicken Salad, Classic Roasted Herb Chicken, Chicken Nuggets, Chicken Caesar Salad, Chicken Fracasse and Chicken Teriyaki. Reservation is Requested! P2,750

October 19 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! CHRISTMAS PACKAGING IDEAS** by: Glenn Remora, floral designer. Learn how to make unique wrappers and packaging for your holiday goodies using an assortment of materials locally available. Do your own paper wrappers, prints and accessories for home and business use. Full participation. P2,500

October 20 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING** by: Chef Koichi Kondo "Sushi, Sashimi, Sukiyaki, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodle in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice. P2,500

October 20 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! CRAB AND SHRIMP FESTIVAL I** by: Chef Katherine Sion Recipes: Crab and Shrimp Hot Pot Soup, Fried Soft Shell Crab with Salt and Pepper and Chinese Salad, Steamed Crab with Ginger, Garlic and Leeks, Crab with Black Beans Sauce, Malaysian Crab, Hot Shrimp Chow Mein, Fried Prawns with Tomato and Peppers Sauce and Steamed Drunken Shrimp. P2,500

October 22 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **BREADS & ROLLS** by: Henry Sison Recipes: Panettone, Lavash, Bagels, Cinnamon Rolls, Soft Dinner Rolls, Baguette, Italian Amaretto Sweet Bread and Honey-Raisin Bread. P1,500

October 22 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) **GUILT-FREE SWEET TEMPTATIONS** by: Chef Juan Carlo Estagile Let Carlo show the tricks of giving in to those tempting sweets yet avoiding the fat and the carbs. Recipes include various kinds of Fat-free Yogurt Cheesecake with Fat-free crust, Fat-free Vodka Cake, Apple-Banana Bread Pudding, and Fat-free Carrot Cake. He will also show you how to whip up a totally fat-free, sugar free whipping topping from scratch. P1,500

October 23 (Tuesday) 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **NEW CLASS! HOLIDAY DESIGNER CAKES** by: Chef Vicki Villanueva, "X'mas is very much in the corner. Dress up your cake. Chef Vick unveils her 2007 X'mas holiday designer cakes. All new and exciting recipes and techniques. Recipes: Fohz Navidad Chestnut Torte, Noelle's Pistachio Gateau, Java's Bûche de Noël, Santa's Chocolate Fish, Rudolf's Strawberry Charlotte Cake and Tutti Frutti Trifle Cake. Reservation is Requested! P2,850

October 24 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **COOKING FOR THE HOLIDAYS** by: Chef Vivian Syyp "Chicken Liver Palet, Tartlets with Figs & Mushroom Ragout, Classic Prime Thermidor, Christmas Ham with Cinnamon Spice Glaze, White Truffle Whipped Potatoes, Green Beans with Bacon and Banana-Rum Raisin with Sabayon Sauce P2,500

October 25 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **SWEET BUT SUGAR FREE CAKES I** by: Chef Jacqueline Ang-Po "Class Desserts like Strawberry Cheesecake, French Apple Pie Chocolate Cake, Banana Chocolate Muffin, Poppy Seed Cake, Carrot Bars with Cream Cheese Icing, Chocolate Walnut Cookies. For people who are conscious of sugar intake. P1,800

October 26 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) **SACKYARD GRILLING & BARBECUE WORKSHOP PART 2** by: Chef Sam de Leon (Limited to 18 students only) The chef shares with you, in this full participation workshop, a few of his signature Grilling and Barbecue all time favorites. Recipes: Charbroiled SAH'S Baby Back Ribs w/ Barbecue Sauce and Grilled Corn, Grilled Blue Marlin w/ Sauce Grenoblaise, Grilled Tuna Steak in Kikkoman Oyster Marmade w/ Tamarind-Miso Dip, B Grilled Squid w/ Hot Chili Soy Vinegar, Grilled Chicken Breasts w/ Green Pepper Corn Sauce, Grilled Prawns w/ Beurre Noisette and Charbroiled Alimango w/ Roasted Siling Pangang Vinegar-Bagoong Isda Dip. P2,300

October 27 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (classroom B) **CHRISTMAS GIVE AWAY I** (Features delicious and easy to make Bars and Cookies) by: Chef Vicki Villanueva You are sure to enjoy baking them! Recipes: The Best Chocolate Cookie, Black Forest Bars, Chocorut Crumble Bars, No Bake Brownies, Flourless Brownie and Brownie Christmas Pudding. Reservation is Requested! P1,950

October 27 (Saturday) 1:30 - 5:30 p.m. (classroom B) **NEW CLASS! SOMETHING FISHY** by: Carrie Madrid Recipes: Creamy Baked Salmon, Fish and Corn Chowder, Fried Fish in Beer batter with Aioli Sauce, Fish in parchment, Crispy Tilapia with Sweet Soy dipping sauce and Grilled Fish Kebab. P1,800

October 29 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) **SECRETS NO MORE I** by: Henry Sison "Decadent Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing & Caramel Sauce, Lemon Torte, Ensaymada, Almond Sannal Strawberry Shortcake & Ube Cake P3,000

TUITION FEE includes ingredients. Reservation is required. WEDDING & BIRTHDAY CAKE orders by appointment only. We sell Cake Decorating, Confectionery and Baking Supplies. FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT OUR CLASSES, RESERVATIONS & INQUIRIES visit or call us at: 33 Bonne Serrano Avenue (formerly Santolan Road) Crame, Quezon City Telephone #: 726-5316 / 412-7792 E-mail: henyison@pacific.net.ph Website: www.henyison.com

HUMMINGBIRD SOON!

Our new branch in Makati will be opening soon, together with a cafe and a kitchen, gallery restaurant. We need Chef instructors, Office & Kitchen Staff and Retail Sales Ladies. For more information, visit our website www.henyison.com or send your resume to henyison@pacific.net.ph



LIFESTYLE

THE CONSUMER

Your soap may not be keeping you safe from germs

By Linda B. Bolido

DO ANTIBACTERIAL SOAPS really do a better job of protecting you from disease-causing microbes?

Apparently not.

In an article for MSN Health & Fitness, Robert Preidt says "antibacterial soaps that contain triclosan as the main active ingredient are no better at preventing infections than plain soaps."

Preidt was reporting on the assessment by a team of University of Michigan researchers of results of 27 studies conducted between 1980 and 2006.

He said the "team also concluded that these antibacterial soaps could actually pose a health risk, because they may reduce the effectiveness of some common antibiotics, such as amoxicillin."

What the researchers found out was the antibacterial soap available to the general public was not the same as those used in hospitals and other clinical settings.

The commercial variety of antibacterial soaps was found not to "contain high enough concentrations of triclosan to kill bacteria such as E. coli (a food-borne bacteria that causes potentially deadly gastrointestinal infection)."

Researcher Allison Aiello, in a statement issued by the UM team, said, "The soaps containing triclosan used in the community settings are no more effective than plain soap at preventing infectious illness symptoms, as well as reducing bacteria on the hands."

The UM team said, "What we are saying is that these E. coli could survive in the concentrations that we use in our [consumer-formulated] antibacterial soaps."

Aiello said consumers should be made aware of the contents of the products they were using.

The UM study was published in the August issue of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

Not true

Do not believe an e-mail saying Maggi Liquid Seasoning 100 ml (in a bottle) and Nestea Enveloped Tea Bag 2g have been phased out supposedly because both are produced in China.

Aurora Alipao of Nestlé's Consumer Services said, while it was true both products were being phased out, the move had nothing to do with China but rather market realities.

Alipao said "they are not doing well in the Philippines; thus, it has reached the point where it is no longer cost-efficient for us to continue importing them."

She also stressed that both products—Maggi Liquid Seasoning was made in China and the Nestea Tea Bags were from India—were safe.

Alipao said, Nestlé products,

"regardless of the source country and the process used," complied with strict company and international food safety and quality standards.

Fine print

Talking about consumer awareness, buyers should make sure they know where they are supposed to bring a new purchase that breaks down during the warranty period.

Somebody we know recently bought a mobile phone from one of the outlets of a major mobile-phone network. The guy was obviously protecting his hard-earned money by going only to a legitimate retailer.

Not long after, however, he realized he got a lemon. The guy, instead of going back to the mobile network where he got the phone, went to the service center of its manufacturer.

But the manufacturer's responsibility up to that period was only to repair the phone, not replace it. His receipt actually said that, within 15 days after purchase, any problem should be referred to the seller who would change the unit if it turned out to be truly defective.

So, in the four months that he had his phone, he was back at the service center four times.

Had he read the fine print and realized what he was supposed to do the first time, he could have had the lemon changed with a working phone immediately.

Free seminars

Citibank is giving talks on "Use Credit Wisely" for free. Interested groups that can have an audience of at least 30 people may contact Citibank for a schedule. The seminar is open even to non-Citibank clients.

Those interested can visit www.citibank.com.ph and click on the "How Are We Doing" button. They will be brought to a page where they should choose the "Email Us" option.

Participants will have the chance to receive a complimentary copy of the bank's 52-page illustrated booklet on "Use Credit Wisely."

Companies may be interested to organize a seminar for their employees to help them manage their finances better.

As recent figures of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas show, credit-card use is growing in the Philippines but Filipinos still have a lot to learn about the wise use of "plastic."

Hence, records also show that receivables and bad debts from credit-card use are also growing.

Meanwhile, I want to thank Nokia's Nikka Abes for helping resolve quickly a problem we referred to them.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Magsaysay and Yague Sts., Makati City; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph

Getting a head start on the holidays

NOW EVERYONE CAN spread some holiday cheer by playing Santa to family and friends with Rustan's Supermarket's stress-free holiday shopping strategy.

For more personalized presents, browse and select from an extensive range of themed baskets custom-designed for every preference. Those with a sweet tooth will surely enjoy Choco Lover's Delight, a gift package brimming with a variety of decadent chocolates. For the Oriental palate, Holiday Inspirations from Asia offers gourmet items and spices traditionally found and used in Asian cuisine. Cooking enthusiasts will delight in Baker's Delight with its collection of specialty ingredients and baking treats. Packed with rich-flavored teas and complements, the Tea Time Delight basket is a health buff's dream.

For added spunk and style, goods are placed in woven baskets lavishly adorned with holiday accents.

Shoppers may even opt to avail of Rustan's Supermarket's gift certificates, which are good to use for an entire year. That way, everyone on your gift list can get whatever they want all year round.

For more information on corporate sales, gift certificates and grocery services, you may call the following branches: Makati branch—8939275, 8928394, fax 8928397; Rockwell branch—898-1273, 8981271, fax 8981272; Gateway branch—9120686, 9120598; and Shangri-La Branch—6334423, 6334426, fax 6347466.

Rustan's Fresh Supermarkets are located in Ayala Center, Makati; Rockwell Power Plant Mall; Gateway Mall, Cubao; Shangri-La Plaza, Edsa; Greenbelt 1, Makati; San Antonio Plaza, Forbes Park; Magallanes; Katipunan Road and Corinthian Hills.



Enhanced dining experience at pizza bistro

FRESH AND ALMOST FORMAL interiors, wines and flowers on tabletops, a wide selection of dishes that includes gourmet food, and food servers asking how's your eating experience. This is Pizza Hut Bistro, Pizza Hut's newest restaurant that offers a dining experience beyond what the pizza fast-food chain usually does.

Pizza Hut worldwide is currently into diversification of its restaurants and the bistro concept is part of the change meant to upgrade the food conglomerate's offerings.

Mary Ann Cabading of Philippine Pizza

Inc., the company that owns the Pizza Hut franchise in the country, says, "People are dining out more often and they expect elevated standards for service, ambiance and choices on the menu such as gourmet items."

Cabading says the upgrade, however, did come with a price, but not too stiff as to turn away Pizza Hut loyalists who come for affordable and attractive prices.

She adds that the menu list for Pizza Hut Bistro has increased 20 times more than the offering of a regular Pizza Hut restaurant. There are now more side dishes, finger foods, salads, gourmet pasta dishes and pizzas with pizzazz.

Side dishes are a whole new dimension as Pizza Hut Bistro offers quite a number of them—chicken wings, calamari, tropical shrimps, bistro cheesy pops, fish and chips, samplers that come in platters, French onion soup, salads such as the crab salad roll consisting of cucumber and kani in rice wrappers. The bistro also offers rice meals, such as the executive meal that includes

veggies and a choice of barbecue.

Despite being an American-themed restaurant, Pizza Hut Bistro has French and Italian wines on every table, although also available are fancy or cocktail drinks for those who wish to have them.

Pizza Hut Bistro also boasts of see-through kitchens where chefs can be seen performing their magic on the food.

Pizza Hut Bistros are located at Gateway Mall in Araneta Center, Cubao; Insular Building in Ayala Avenue, Makati; E. Rodriguez, Robinson's Galleria, Mall of Asia, Eastwood, Glorietta 4 and Tomas Morato.



SEAFOOD Pasta



SAMPLER Plate

Healthy and nutritious pasta recipes

FOR THE HEALTH- AND DIET-conscious, Gallo Pastas shares these recipes using its healthy range of pastas. Gallo's Fiber Up Pasta, made of natural oat fiber and durum wheat, has three times more fiber than regular pasta. The Gallo V200 vegetable pastas are made of 40 percent vegetables.

Macaroni with Anchovies and Capers

350 g Gallo Fiber Up Macaroni
500 g ripe, firm tomatoes
2 salted anchovies
1 tbsp capers
Sprig of parsley
2 garlic cloves
Small piece hot pepper
3 tbsp virgin olive oil

Wash tomatoes, peel, remove seeds and chop pulp. Peel garlic cloves. Wash and remove spine from anchovies. Remove stems from parsley, wash and mince. Sauté garlic cloves and anchovies in a saucepan with oil, smashing anchovies with a fork until

they are puréed. Add tomatoes, hot pepper, capers and parsley and cook for 15 minutes, adding a bit of water if sauce thickens too quickly.

Meanwhile, cook Gallo Pasta in a pot with plenty of boiling salted water. Drain when al dente, pour onto a platter, season and serve hot.

Spaghetti with Prunes

400 g Gallo Fiber Up Spaghetti
100 g prunes
50 g dried apricots
2 tbsp tomato sauce
Oregano
Olive oil and salt

Soak prunes and dried apricots in water for 2-3 hours or boil in water for about 5 minutes.

Drain, chop and sauté until golden in a frying pan with olive oil. Cook the Gallo pasta in plenty of salted boiling water. Once drained, place in a dish and add sautéed prunes and dried apricots. Finally, add the tomato sauce and two pinch-

es of oregano. Stir with care.

Spaghetti with Paprika and Yoghurt

350 g Gallo Fiber Up Spaghetti
2 twists of paprika
3 cartons whole yoghurt
1 spoonful chopped black olives
1 clove garlic
2 spoonfuls oil
Salt

Boil the Gallo Spaghetti al dente in a saucepan with plenty of boiling salted water. In the meantime, heat the oil and fry the peeled and finely chopped garlic in another pan.

Add the yoghurt, the chopped olives, a twist of salt and paprika. Stir well and remove from the heat immediately. Season the Gallo Spaghetti and add another twist of paprika.

Spaghetti with Salmon and Dijon Mustard

500 g Gallo V200 Spaghetti
4 fillets of salmon, broken up
2-3 minced garlic cloves

4 spoonfuls oil
1 small glass of Antique-style Dijon mustard
125 ml dry white wine
Lemon wedges

Cook the Gallo Pasta in plenty of salted boiling water. When Gallo Pasta is al dente, remove and drain well. Sauté garlic in oil until tender. In the same oil, cook salmon. Add mustard, white wine and blend with Gallo Pasta.

Spaghetti with Shrimp

1 k Gallo V200 Spaghetti
150 g shrimp
200 g mussels
200 g tuna
1 k tomato
3 garlic cloves
Virgin olive oil
Salt

Boil salted water. When boiling,

add Gallo Spaghetti. Once done, remove and save. Meanwhile, cook mussels with lemon juice. Place frying pan with oil on fire. Add minced garlic, shrimp, cooked shelled mussels and sauté.

Allow to cool. Once cooled, place in a salad bowl with Gallo Spaghetti, add tuna and chopped tomato and toss gently.

GALLO tricolor pasta



COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

A private fruit festival

THE NEWSPAPERS RECENTLY reported that fruits from Jolo were brought to Manila on board a military C-31 plane as part of the project "Fruits of Hope," a peace program initiated by the Philippine National Red Cross headed by Senator Richard Gordon.

What "Fruits of Hope" can do is call attention to the untapped riches of Mindanao and create a way for its fruits and even its seafood to reach the north. Then prosperity can trickle down to its people and maybe peace can come after that.

What amazed people who talked to me about it were the prices of the fruits in Jolo (P5 for a kilo of mangosteen, for instance). In Manila, those fruits can cost about 20 times more.

But my own story is even better. I was in Makilala, North Cotabato, two weeks ago and our fruits were given free.

Every two years, North Cotabato has a bumper harvest of cash fruit crops—mangosteen, lanzones, durian and rambutan. This year is one of them.

I was also there two years ago on the invitation of my friend Jill Sandique.

Both times I missed by a week the fruit festival called Timpupo in Makilala's neighboring town of Kidapawan. That is when fruits are piled on tables at the center is-



MANGOSTEEN tree

land of the main highway and people can eat as much as they can.

Bottomless fruits

Anyway, at the Sandique home, we had our own fruit festival. You could say we had "bottomless" fruits.

This year, there was an added treat. We were brought to the farm by Jill's mother, Dr. Lita, to see firsthand where those fruits grew. We had to dip the soles of our shoes into protectin to disinfect them to protect the trees from disease and pests.

Aphids have invaded most of the lanzones trees in Makilala. Many of the trees have shed their leaves and are diseased, which is so sad because trees take time to grow and bear fruit. And a fruiting lanzones tree is so beautiful with or without leaves.

The lanzones varieties grown there are the *duku* and the *longkong*. *Duku* is also grown in Malaysia and Indonesia while the *longkong* is grown in Thailand. Whatever kind it was, the lanzones at the time of my visit was sweet.

The mangosteen trees, on the

other hand, looked healthy. You can hardly see the fruits because of the leaves. Men climbed the trees to gather the fruit.

Dr. Lita told us she would design a smaller crate for the mangosteen because the fruits were heavy and she could see how difficult it was for the boys to carry the big crate.

Nothing beats freshly picked fruits. It is because each one is like a trophy so it seems to taste sweeter, better.

Lesson on mangosteen

One of the drivers taught us that you could tell how many seeds there were in the mangosteen by counting the petal-like formation at the bottom. We tried it and it was true.

On the way back, we passed some durian trees. Some still had fruits. I asked if it was safe to walk under those trees because being hit on the head by one of those heavy, spiked pieces could kill you. I was told that, when the fruits were ready, they fell but only at night.

For those who love *durian*, it is always special when you can taste the creamy seeds. I have friends who organize a *durian* party when supply comes from relatives in the Mindanao.

In the Sandique household, you are asked to try several varieties. The winner is always the native variety. It has smaller seeds and is the creamiest, whitest and smelliest.

It was funny how the smell was expected but was not there when we were eating so many pieces at the round table of the Sandiques. But, in my freezer, the smell travels throughout the refrigerator.

As for the *rambutan*, we did not have to go too far. At our hosts' backyard was a large tree. Red fruits were interspersed with green leaves. They were



LANZONES tree still heavy with fruit but leafless

too high to be picked. Now that the fruits from our cache have run out, I think of that tree and wish I have wings to pick the remaining *rambutan*.

It is the same for the *marang*. The trees grow wild all over the place but no one wants to harvest them because they do not sell as well as the other fruits and they rot too easily.

I love that fruit, though, because it is always sweet and easy to eat. Pity the guest with us who never tasted it. He wanted to but could not because he had to be the one to climb the

tall *marang* tree and get the fruit.

Before we left, Dr. Lita asked each of us how many kilos of any or all the fruits we wanted. We knew that, while it was all free, overweight cargo on a plane was not. But we all went for the overweight charges anyway.

When Gordon returned from Jolo with the Fruits of Hope, someone commented how beautiful the lanzones containers were as the fruits were being unloaded from the air force plane. I remember how I want-

ed to bring the woven container home the first time I saw it in Tawi-tawi on a trip there some 10 years ago. They held big lanzones pieces because the fruit grew wild in the area.

In the market, my guide showed me soap "from the Philippines" that was more expensive than the one from Borneo. He talked as if his island was not part of the country.

That was both amusing and sad.

E-mail the author at pinoy-food04@yahoo.com.

TASTEMAKERS

Fresh, new face for supermarket

ROBINSONS SUPERMARKETS unveiled its newly renovated Galleria branch designed for customers' greater convenience, health and well-being. The blessing was graced by Robinsons Group's Elizabeth Gokongwei, senior vice president and group general manager Robina Gokongwei-Pe, general manager Jody Gadia, assistant vice president for merchandising Bobby Mabanta, and first vice president for operations Ronnie Ong. In the redesigned Robinsons Supermarket, specialty sections are clearly marked by attractive, large-format signs. There is also a greater variety of products, making Robinsons Supermarket a one-stop shop, with emphasis on fresh and healthy food. The section called Whole Health is a partnership with Nestlé. Also present are French Baker and Mickey's Delicatessen, as well as the new Beauty Essentials Health and

Beauty Center.

TACO BELL, the world's biggest Mexican fast-food chain has opened its newest branch at Trinoma in Quezon City. Known for its burritos, *quesadillas*, nachos, among others, Taco Bell also has branches at Gateway Mall, E. Rodriguez Avenue, SM Southmall, and Araneta Coliseum concourse.

TRIPLE V's Dads, Kamayan and Saisaki restaurants offer a three-in-one buffet of Continental, Japanese and Filipino dishes at reasonable prices. Pre-booked baptismal package (worth P20,000+) also covers party amenities like streamers, personalized invitations and thank-you cards. As a token for the honor, Triple V will provide a specially crafted baby cradle adorned with balloons and ornaments. Parents may also have

theme parties in their preferred branch. Kamayan, Dads Ultimate Buffet, and Saisaki branches are located in SM Megamall (6331758), Glorietta 3 (8928898), Edsa (7051807), West Avenue (4136359-60), Alabang Town Center (8075825), and Padre Faura (5281723-24).

GREENWICH has opened its first branch on Ayala Avenue. Graphic designer Team Manila has created colorful artwork for the walls. The branch offers free wireless Internet access and has outlets for charging of cell phones. But Greenwich Phil First carries the same items found in other branches. Customers can see how the dishes are prepared through the open kitchen. Order-taking is made more efficient with the use of personal digital assistants or PDAs that send orders straight to the kitchen.

YOSHINOYA, the Japanese fast-food chain, has opened its sixth restaurant in the Philippines at the SM Mall of Asia. A Japanese-themed celebration marked the event. Yoshinoya also set up the Tanabata Wish Tree in mall entrances and held fun-filled attractions such as the Japanese gift-



JODY Gadia, Pong Ejercito, Pete Ramos, Robina Gokongwei-Pe, Sanjiv Mehta and Bobby Mabanta

wrapping and origami demo by Sterling Papers, anime demo by PSICOM Publishing and makers of Otakuzine, and Yoshinoya Edo Kite Exhibition. Yoshinoya also has branches at Park Square 1, Ayala Center, SM Megamall, SM City North Edsa, Robinsons Galleria, and Greenhills Shopping Center.

AMERICAN HOSPITALITY ACADEMY (AHA) Philippines has joined the Salcedo Community Market, a project of Barangay Bel-Air, by sharing its culinary knowledge and expertise. Daki Fernando, AHA Philippines marketing director, said this was the school's way of

giving service to the neighborhood. On Oct. 6 and Nov. 10, chef Gene Cordova, president of AHA Philippines, will discuss fusion cuisine. Special Christmas recipes will be featured Dec. 8.

CITIBANK offers Citibank World Privileges for a new round of great discounts, freebies and more at some of Metro Manila's premier dining establishments. Until Sept. 30, cardholders get a free Crostini from Trio or a Vietnamese Iced Coffee at Zao Vietnamese Bistro for a minimum P500 single-receipt food purchase. Over at Pasto Italian Café and Dessert Bar, get a free

Margherita Pizza for every purchase of one family-size pasta. Other offers are good until the end of 2007. If you're a party of six, head over to Alba's and one of you eats for free. From now until May 15, 2008, Citibank cardholders enjoy an exclusive 5 + 1 offer—where five paying guests for the lunch or dinner buffet will entitle the sixth member to dine free. Gold and Platinum cardholders also enjoy exclusive 20-percent discount on their food bill at Pizza Hut, Rasa, Sachi and Trattoria Uno. Other dining establishments also offer discounts for Gold and Platinum clients. Call 99599999.



ERIC Romarate, Taco Bell Trinoma branch manager; Maggie Wilson, Bb. Pilipinas World 2007; Mark Sotto of Trinoma; Sol Valdez, Taco Bell district manager; and Nadia Shami, Bb. Pilipinas International 2007



YOSHINOYA Century Pacific vice chair Ricardo Po Jr., business unit head Leo Po and chair Ricardo Po Sr. with SM Mall of Asia manager Perkin So at the ribbon-cutting for the new Yoshinoya-MOA restaurant



CHEF Gene Cordova demonstrates fusion cooking to Salcedo Community Market goers.

WHITE chocolate
cannelloni with mango
and champagne soupRED WINE-BRAISED
beef cheeks ravioli

Tasting Gaddi's in Manila

CHEF David
Goodridge of
The Peninsula
Hong Kong

By Micky Fenix

GADDI'S IS THE restaurant I should have visited but did not at The Peninsula Hong Kong. I did go to Felix, when it had just opened, and marveled at its then new look. I also had tea at the opulent golden lobby.

Fortunately, Gaddi's has come to town, twice, in the person of chef David Goodridge, who visited and cooked. Both times the venue was The Old Manila at The Peninsula Manila.

During his recent visit, Goodridge gave a preview *degustation* of what to expect in the ongoing promotion "Gaddi's in Old Manila," which ends Sept. 22.

Gaddi's is the French restaurant in the Hong Kong hotel. While Goodridge keeps to that style of cooking, he said he was not "a classical French cook, in that I don't like to do a lot of reductions."

Chef Goodridge describes his cooking as 'clean, decisive and fresh from both taste and health perspectives'

He described his cooking as "clean, decisive and fresh from both taste and health perspectives."

Scanning through his seven-course tasting, we giggled at the "health perspective" but at the end of that long dinner, we had to agree with what he set out to do.

Oyster tartar was served in a glass with marinated cucumbers and Oscietra caviar. I was reminded of the way *kinilaw* was done with cucumbers in Mindanao. And oysters certainly tasted better with champagne, this time the Peninsula's Deutz.

What is fine dining without *foie gras*? There was a square-shaped confit with a rhubarb puree, quite big for a tasting but I was not complaining. It went well with the Riesling, a Gunderloch, Jean Baptiste Riesling Kabinett 2002.

Like Adria's experiment

The next one was a wonder, light asparagus custard with poached quail's egg and green pea cappuccino placed inside a chicken egg shell. It had all those flavors from the different ingredients, each one distinct and yet blended together. It was like an experiment of Ferran Adria, the famous Spanish chef who works out his menu in a laboratory rather than a kitchen.

I suddenly remembered that one entrée of the chef two years ago was poached meat inside a plastic bag. That was taken with a

sauvignon blanc from Selaks Marlborough.

The next course had us imagining because it said beef cheeks and the closest we could associate it with was *kare-kare*. Instead it was more like *adobo* because it was braised in red wine and inserted into ravioli pockets. Chef Goodridge said later that he liked to work with those unusual parts like beef cheeks. The meat was soft, flavorful and gelatinous.

The seafood dish had red mullet and squid with a bouillabaisse sauce, truly French even if deconstructed. It was served with a *pinot noir*, a Bourgogne Rouge from Louis Jadot 2004. A red wine with seafood? Trust the chef.

Fowl was our final dish, a Bresse pigeon. All of us had heard of Bresse chicken that came from the Burgundy region of France but we were delighted to know that they also raised pigeons. It came as oven-baked with black truffle and with a Madeira sauce. Madeira sauce is very French even if the dessert wine comes from the Portuguese island of Madeira.

The pigeon was taken with a Rioja Reserva from the Bodegas Ramon Bilbao 2001.

To clean the palate, nothing like champagne soup with mango (really like the Chinese dessert of mango with sago) that came with white chocolate cannelloni. Dessert wine

was a Sauternes Baron Philippe, AC Sauternes 2002.

Trained by the best

Gaddi's has had several French and Swiss chefs. Goodridge is British but he trained with the best chefs and restaurants such as Raymond Blanc in Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons in Oxfordshire, England and at the French restaurants La Maison Troigros, Restaurant Pierre Gagnaire and La Cote d'Or. He also headed to Japan to work at the restaurant of Koyoma Hirosha.

All those experiences helped develop his style but Goodridge said he knew he was cooking for a French restaurant and so he was aware of the classic way of cooking French. But he did use some techniques he learned in Japan.

I'll have a chance to dine at Gaddi's finally if I win the three-night stay for two at The Peninsula Hong Kong with round-trip business class tickets for two from Cathay Pacific. All I have to do is try the festival "Gaddi's in Old Manila" Sept. 14-22.

And for those interested in learning some recipes, there will be a cooking class, "Entertaining Gaddi's Style", 9 a.m.-12 noon, Sept. 22, inclusive of a three-course lunch, a Peninsula Academy apron and a special gift.

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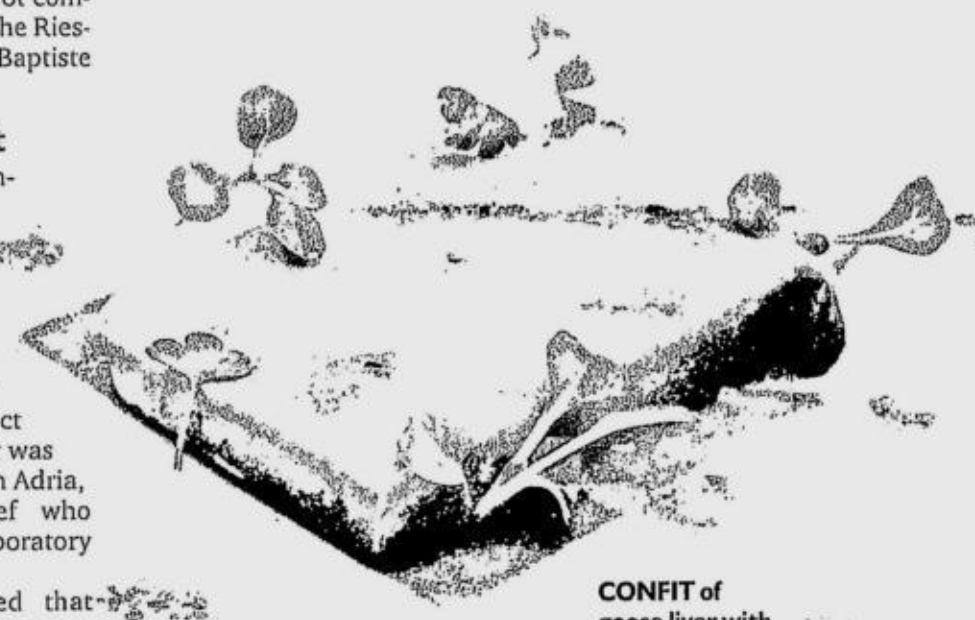
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CONFIT of
goose liver with
rhubarb puree

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Sept. 22: Children's Party Buffet (all new, special class)—Corndogs: Corndogs, Cheese Corndogs; Corndog Burgers; Sandwich Buffet for Kids—4 playful and delicious 'wiches your kids will love; popcorn stand: 3 Kinds of Delicious Flavored Popcorn—Best-ever Caramel, Cinnamon Nut and Colored; Cupcakes: lasagna, meat ball and delicious chocolate cupcakes two frostings; Mini-barbecue

Sept. 24: Cinnamon (all new)—My latest take on cinnamon rolls: Feather Soft, Kona Cinnamon Dough, Cappuccino, Cream Cheese & White Chocolate; Apple Pie: caramel, sour cream

Sept. 26: Wasabi—Phyllo Spring Rolls, Tuna Tartar with Wasabi Cream Sauce & Salsa Fresca, Crab Tempura with Caviar Wasabi, Cream Stir-fried Shrimp in Wasabi Butter, Delicious Angus Roast Beef with Honey Wasabi Crust, Wasabi Fried Rice, Salmon Belly with Sweet Miso Wasabi Sauce, Wasabi Potatoes, Dessert

Call 9289296, 9273008 or 6335162.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

INSIDE

■ **Can't compare KC Conception with Angel Locsin Dollywood /D6**
 ■ **Packed calendar tonight**
Showtime /D6



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DUNKIN' DONUTS
Pasalubong ng Bayan

ABC 5 sore about 'Idol' move

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

'WE WANTED 'Philippine Idol' on our own terms, or not at all. We were only willing to buy 'Idol' and not any other [Fremantle] programs or formats packaged with it. [Fremantle] has apparently found what they think is a better deal.'

ABC 5, through senior vice president for Corporate Affairs Terra

Daffon, on Tuesday issued this statement about the looming transfer of "Philippine Idol" to GMA 7.

Geraldine Bravo, director of Marketing and Sales for FremantleMedia ("Idol" franchise holder), told INQUIRER Entertainment that GMA 7 "[has] licensed other [Fremantle] shows like 'Celebrity Duets,' 'Whammy' and

ABC/D4

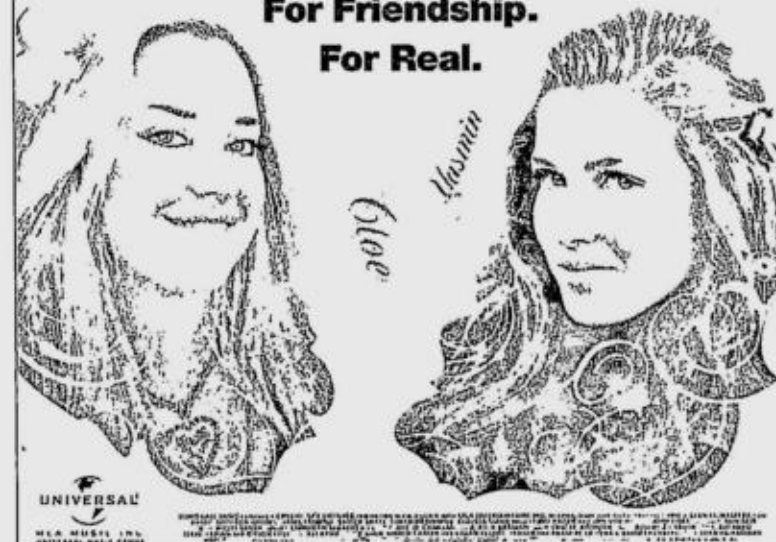
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BRATZ 2:35, 5:15, 7:55, 10:35 G	UNDERDOG 4:25, 6:35 G
WAR: ROGUE ASSASSIN 8:35, 11:00 R-13	

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THE BRAVE ONE R13 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	UNDERDOG G 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10	I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY - R13 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30

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1 THE HOST 11:00, 1:55, 4:45, 7:35, 10:25 PG-13	2 ROGUE ASSASSIN 11:00, 1:15, 3:35, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15 R-13
3 SHOOT EM UP 10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 R-13	4 THE BRATZ 11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:20, 10:35 GP
5 CHUCK & LARRY 10:45, 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:50 R-13	

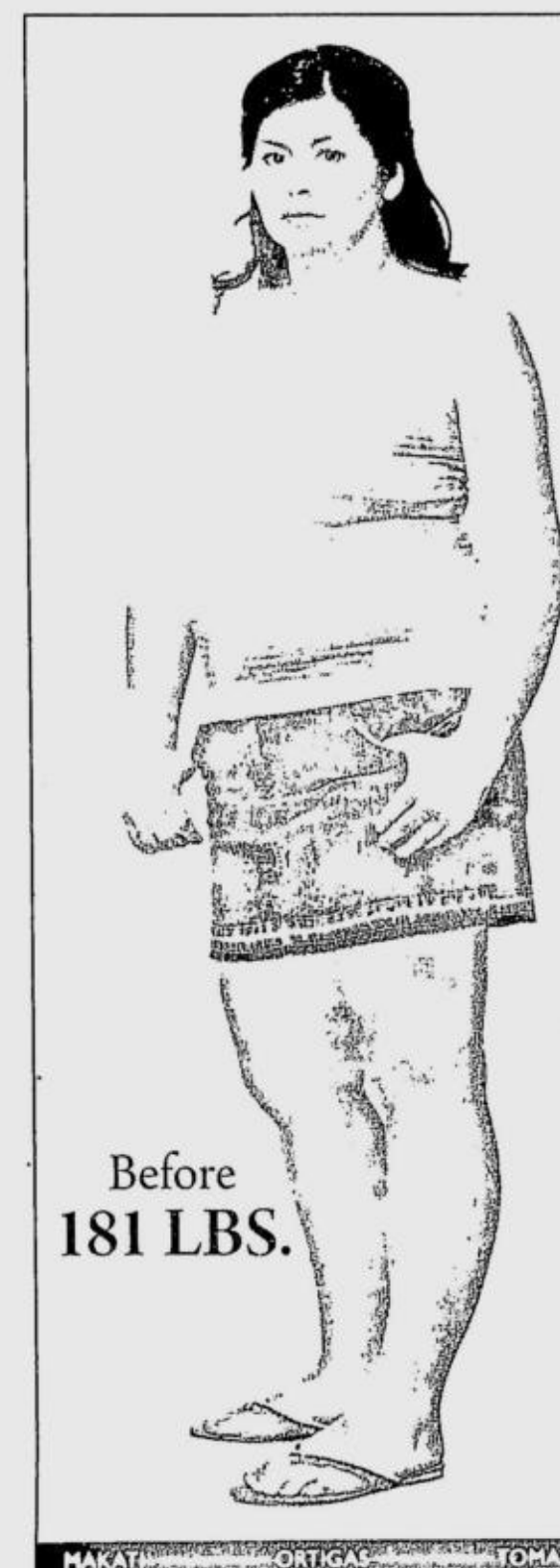
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MUSIC MUSEUM

September 22, 2007 September 29, 2007 October 05 & 09 2007 October 12 & 13, 2007	Jeff Pangan, Michael De Mesa, Ricky Daval Sugarfree "Alamat" Stageplay Apo Hiking Society	8:00 PM 8:00 PM 8:00 PM 8:00 PM
Sept. 21, 29, 2007 Sep. 26, 27 Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Drag - On's Cerrudo Classico	10:00 PM 8:00 PM


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Aiko:

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"I never thought I'd end up being overweight. I used to be slimmer in my younger years. When I gained weight and went up to a 37-inch waistline, my life changed. I started losing acting projects. People would come up to me and tell me outright that I was fat. It really made me lose my confidence! I had liposuction done but when I gained excess weight again, it was triple of what I lost before. As for diets -- you name it, I've tried it! I just kept losing and gaining again. Then Dawn (Zulueta), who's a close friend, recommended Marie France. I was encouraged by her weight-loss success story. I started going regularly and so far I've already slimmed down to a 32-inch waistline! I'm still a work in progress but so far I feel better because I know I look slimmer and healthier!"

- Aiko Melendez
Actress and Public Official

Call 894-BODY (2639)

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

JENNIFER!!!
WHERE ARE
YOU, JENNYYY!!!

KAHIT HINANG-
HINA AT HA-
LOS UNCON-
SCIOUS NA, MAY
REAKSYON SI
JENNIFER...

A-ARVINNN...

NARINIG IYON
NI ARVIN...

JENNIFER!!!
I'M COMING!!!

SABAY-SABAY
BINOBOMBA
NG TUBIG ANG
KINARORONAN
NI ARVIN...

NAG-COLLAPSE ANG
WALL NA YARI SA
TABLA...

KRAASS!

TO BE CONTINUED

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

MAG 'TALK' KA SA
SEMINAR?
OO, SA SAMAR

SA ENVIRONMENTAL
JOURNALISM
SEMINAR

WOW!
KAYA KA PALA
MABAIT, KASI...

SEMINARIAN
KA!

PUGAD BABOY

BY RM. JUNIOR

ANO ANG TAWAG NG MGA
ESCH SA MGA MAHILIG
MAGSUSUT NG MAMAH-
LIN PERO IMPRACTICAL
NA DAMIT AT ALAHA?

PIMPIN'

ANO ANG TAWAG SA
MGA NAGMAMANEHO
NG DRESSED-UP AT
TRICKED-OUT NA
BOOC HEMI?

PIMPIN'

ANO ANG TAWAG SA
MGA GABI- GABING
NAKIKIPAG-PARTY
SA MGA DUGONG-
BUGAW AT ALTA DE
SOCIEDAD?

PIMPIN'

ANO ANG TAWAG SA
FACILITATOR NG ZTE
BROADBAND DEAL KUNG
SAAN ANG KICKBACK
E MILYON-MILYONG
DOLYAR?

AY BUGAW
YON.
BUGAW.

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ISANG ARAW...

MELANIE, MAY SASA-
BIHIN AKO SA 'YO PERO
WAG MONG SASABIHIN
KAHIT KANINO, HA?

KINABUKASAN...

MELANIE, WAG MO
ITONG SASABIHIN
KAHIT KANINO, HA?

KINABUKASAN ULI...

MELANIE, BAKIT
WALA KANG IMIK?
KANINA KA PA
TATIMIK!

PAPNO,
LAHAT NG
GUSTO KONG
SABIHIN...
SIKRETO!!!

ATOMO AND WEBBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

I GUESS I MUST
ACCEPT THAT I DON'T
HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO
HAVE A SUPERPOWER.

I'M JUST AS REGULAR
AS EVERYBODY ELSE.

HERE I AM, A
MERE STATISTIC
IN THE COSMOS...

SIGH... HELLO
DARKNESS, MY
OLD FRIEND.

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

KIKOMACHINEKOMIK
PRESENTS

Naaalala
Kita,
Goody
Pakyutsie

GAME RECORD NA? OK
UM ANO, IBANG LEVEL
DIN TALAGA THRESHOLD
OF PHAGKASAR NGA EH
IMAGININ MO ME ANO
KASAGUTAN KA, TA'S
IYANAN KA BIGLA SA
ERE ASPOWTER!

NAALALA KO DATI ME
NAKASAGUTAN S'YA E
SOBRANG HUMAHAGUL-
GOL NA S'YA. 'YUN'
TIPONG 'DI N'YA NA
MADERESO SALITA
N'YA...

E KH-KH-KASI
N-N-N-NGA S-S-
SA-SAB-SABU K-KO
O-O-P-DI DIB DIBA
A AANO

W-U-WA-WALA
NGA A-AA-AK AKO
N-N-NNUN! PH-PR-
PRO-PR. PROBLEMA
KH-KH-KASI
SA'Y-SA'YO AN'
AN-T-T-T-TIG.

TEXT MO
NA LANG
SA KIN'YAN.

TIG-TIG
T-T-TIGAS N-
NUH-N-NG NG
U-U-ULO M-
M-M-M...

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Frauds
6 Links hazard
10 Navy mascot
14 1985 Ben
Kingsley film
15 Old audio
system
16 Reverse
17 Saxon
18 Hill colonists
19 Article
20 Start of a quip
22 Nary a one
23 Nap
24 Actor's part
26 San Juan or
Bunker
29 Intro
33 Japanese
sashes
37 Superman's
girlfriend
39 Old-style poetry
40 Part 2 of quip
43 Spin
44 Roman despot
45 Turned right
46 Most senior
48 avis
50 Lunch time
52 Pictures in the
mind
57 In a tizzy
60 End of quip
63 Body of water
64 Actress Jessica
65 Relish
66 Grime
67 Top-medal
metal
68 Mary Kate or
Ashley
69 Jai
70 Singles
71 Mail
component

DOWN

1 Open
carriages
2 Capital of
Vietnam
3 Debate to
excess
4 Card-game
displays
5 Creamy
6 Be as it
may...

7 Marriage token
8 Later on
9 Six-shooter
10 Test subject
11 Aware of
12 Yemeni port
13 Large volume
21 Man's talons
25 Lounge lizard's
look
27 Bank
transaction
28 Prisoner
forever
30 Peace bird
31 fix
(obsession)
32 Geek
33 Director
Preminger
34 Soup serving
35 Footnote abbr.
36 African plain
38 Evening in
Padua
41 Besides
42 Greek column
style
47 Island near
Trinidad

By Frances Burton
Summerville, GA

9/20/07

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

B A M A A L D O T A T A R
O P E N L O O N E L E N A
D I N I N G B R E A K M A I L
S A S S Y O M A R A B L E
R E S T S L A B A E S
M A E E R A T M O O R
I N C A I D E A A L F I E
S T O C K B O A R D C L A S S
S E V E N S M E E A M A T
E D I T B A N G I K E
T A R T O L E T A L L
E D Y S R I D S R O Y A L
N E W S C O M M O N P A R T Y
E L A T E P A L E D E R N
T E R S E S P O T S C A N

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9/20/07

49 Chihuahua
chums
51 Man-made
fabric
53 Crown-up
54 Plaster of Paris
55 Key PC key
56 Sharon or
Oliver

57 "M*A*S*H" star
Alan
58 Olympian
Dovers
59 Gumbo
ingredient
61 Qualified
62 Ungentlemanly
men

CONCEPTISU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

9/20

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS

HOW WAS I TO KNOW THE
BALLET WAS SO STUFFY?

AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH A
LITTLE AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION,
ANYWAY?!

ONLY JON WOULD
TAKE A DUCK CALL
TO "SWAN LAKE"

STUPID
USHER!

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're an intelligent, straightforward and honest person. You have excellent people skills, and should use this skill set in your choice of work. You're a great planner; plus you have natural business savvy. Because you're careful and shrewd, you're sometimes cautious about relationships. Your year ahead will focus on partnerships and your closest friendships.

Birthdate of: Anne Meara, comic/actress; Guy Lafleur, hockey player; Sophia Loren, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): The gloves are off. You want to win an argument: You're determined to press your point home. For your own good, lighten up!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel strongly about financial matters of cash flow or perhaps something having to do with a possession or something you own. You're going to defend your turf!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): If you insist on getting your way today, you'll meet with considerable resistance! Power struggles will erupt everywhere. (Hey, you don't have to control things.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 20): If you think something fishy is going on today, it is. Someone who does not have your best interests at heart could be working behind your back. Stay alert!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Power struggles with others are likely today. Don't try to win. It only stirs up the pot. Be gracious and dignified. Walk away.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Take a look in the mirror, because you have to do this for the rest of your life. Today your ambitions might actually be ruthless. Is this who you want to be? (Think about it.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel so strongly about politics, religion, travel or education that you're willing to trample on the ideas of others. Will this get you the harmony and agreement you want? (Not.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Disputes about shared property, wills, inheritances and insurance are likely today. Things could really come to a head. But actually, this is a poor day for these discussions!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You will need to summon all your patience and tolerance to deal with partners and close friends today. Something will provoke you to anger. But this makes things worse! won't make things better. Anger only makes things worse!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): If you feel irritated with others today, channel this energy into hard work. Ironically, if you make a big effort today, you can accomplish a tremendous amount. (Grrrrr!)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Power struggles with romantic partners, children or teammates and sports are very likely today. Tread very carefully. Avoid people who are just losing it. (Yikes!)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be patient with family members today. You're doing a slow boil. Instead, use this same energy to get a lot of work done.

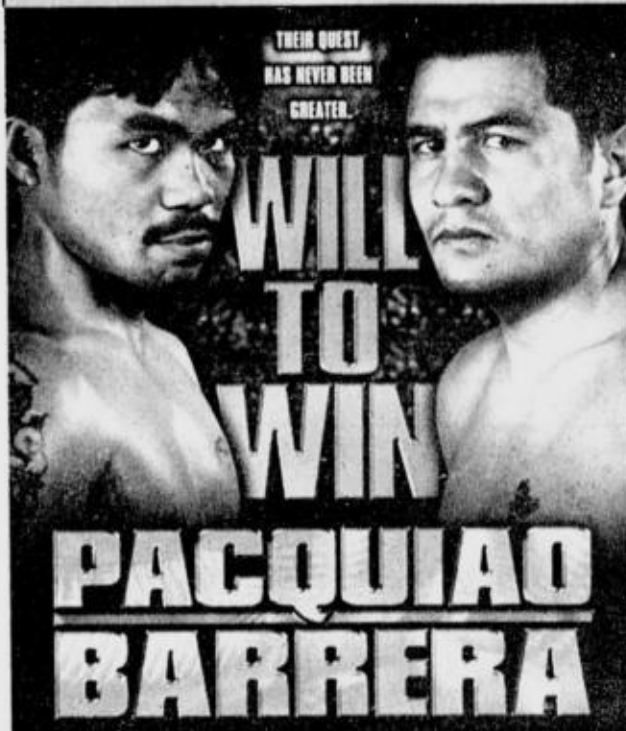
CHEER
FACTOR

"THE BREAKUP" starring Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughan, premieres on HBO on Sunday, Sept. 23, 9 p.m. The movie is about a couple whose relationship has gone sour, but who are both adamant about staying in their apartment. This results in an all-out war of the exes, where the hostile housemates resolve to stand their ground until one of them caves.



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- 1 THE BRAVE ONE
- 2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 4 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 5 BRATZ
- 6 THE HOST

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CINEMA 2

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- 2 GANDHI, MY FATHER
- 3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 4 BRATZ
- 5 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 6 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 8 UNDERDOG
- 9 THE HOST
- 10 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 11 THE BRAVE ONE
- 12 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY BACOR (046)417-3868

- 1 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 2 HAIRSPRAY
- 3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 5 UNDERDOG
- 6 THE BRAVE ONE
- 7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 8 BRATZ

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

- 1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 2 NANCY DREW
- 3 DAYWATCH
- 4 UNDERDOG
- 5 THE LAST LEGION
- 6 DISTURBIA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

- 1 SKINWALKERS
- 2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 3 UNDERDOG
- 4 INVASION/DAYWATCH

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

- 1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 2 UNDERDOG
- 3 NANCY DREW
- 4 INVASION
- 5 LAST LEGION
- 6 DISTURBIA

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

- 1 NANCY DREW
- 2 DISTURBIA
- 3 UNDERDOG
- 4 THE LAST LEGION

METRO MANILA

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

- 1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 4 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 5 BRATZ
- 6 THE BRAVE ONE
- 7 THE HOST
- 8 A LOVE STORY
- 9 RUSH HOUR 3
- 10 1408
- 11 EVAN ALMIGHTY
- 12 UNDERDOG

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

- 1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 2 UNDERDOG
- 3 THE BRAVE ONE
- 4 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
- 6 THE HOST
- 7 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 8 A LOVE STORY
- 9 RESERVED
- 10 EVAN ALMIGHTY
- 11 1408
- 12 BRATZ

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

- 1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 2 UNDERDOG
- 3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 4 BRATZ
- 5 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 6 A LOVE STORY
- 7 THE BRAVE ONE
- 8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 9 1408
- 10 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

- 1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 2 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 3 1408
- 4 BRATZ
- 5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 6 UNDERDOG

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

- 1 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 3 BRATZ
- 4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 5 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 6 UNDERDOG
- 7 THE HOST
- 8 THE BRAVE ONE
- 9 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

- 1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 2 THE BRAVE ONE
- 3 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 6 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 7 BRATZ
- 8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 9 UNDERDOG
- 10 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 11 1408
- 12 THE HOST

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

- 1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 2 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 3 BRATZ
- 4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
- 5 UNDERDOG
- 6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 7 1408
- 8 THE HOST
- 9 A LOVE STORY
- 10 RUSH HOUR 3
- 11 DISTURBIA
- 12 THE BRAVE ONE

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)432201-04

- 1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 2 NANCY DREW
- 3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 4 UNDERDOG

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

- 1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 3 UNDERDOG
- 4 SHOOT 'EM UP

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

- 1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 2 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 4 UNDERDOG

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

- 1 1408
- 2 BLIND DATING
- 3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 4 UNDERDOG
- 5 CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
- 6 UNDERDOG
- 7 DISTURBIA/DAYWATCH
- 8 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 9 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 10 UNDERDOG
- 11 SHOOT 'EM UP
- 12 UNDERDOG

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811

- 1 DAYWATCH
- 2 DISTURBIA
- 3 UNDERDOG
- 4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

- 1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
- 2 OSS 177
- 3 THE LAST LEGION
- 4 NANCY DREW
- 5 DISTURBIA
- 6 DON'T LOOK BACK
- 7 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
- 8 ROGUE ASSASSIN
- 9 SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
- 10 SKINWALKERS
- 11 INVASION/SINKING OF JAPAN
- 12 HAIRSPRAY

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA	
1 THE BRAVE ONE • THX	6 HOST
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	7 UNDERDOG
3 indieSine: LIGAW LIHAM	8 LALKE SA PAROLA
4 BRATZ	9 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
5 SHOOT 'EM UP	10 ROGUE ASSASSIN

exclusive screening

Robinsons Movieworld GALLERIA
September 19 to 25

"Ang Lalake sa Parola" offers a haunting yet insightful glimpse into one man's struggle to discover his true self in a world caught between fantasy and reality. In the midst of a conservative rural community, he must choose between being straight or coming out - and ultimately discovers that truth is indeed stranger than fiction

MTRCB Rating: R18



ERMITA	
1 SHOOT 'EM UP	
2 HOST	5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN	6 UNDERDOG THE BRAVE ONE
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	7 BRATZ

Watch LIVE
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Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA • MANILA
METRO EAST

OCTOBER 7 • Sunday
8:00AM

TICKET PRICE: P600

FREE hotdog, popcorn
and drink for every ticket
purchased

TICKETS are available
at the ticket booth

For inquiries, pls. call the
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METRO EAST

1 UNDEERDOG	5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 THE BRAVE ONE	6 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
3 SHOOT 'EM UP	7 BRATZ
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN	8 RUSH HOUR 3

NOVALICHES

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 SHOOT 'EM UP	4 UNDERDOG

PIONEER

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	3 BRATZ
2 SHOOT 'EM UP	4 HOST

STA. ROSA

1 DISTURBIA	1 UNDERDOG
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 1408
3 DAYWATCH	3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 DON'T LOOK BACK	4 SKINWALKERS

DASMARINAS

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 NANCY DREW	3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 PLANET TERROR	4 UNDERDOG

ANGELES

1 DISTURBIA	1 THE INVASION
2 NANCY DREW	2 A LOVE STORY
3 DAYWATCH	3 1408
4 THE LAST LEGION	

STARMILLS

1 DISTURBIA	4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 NANCY DREW	5 THE LAST LEGION
3 DAYWATCH	6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

1 UNDERDOG	1 UNDERDOG
2 1408	2 DISTURBIA
3 THE INVASION	3 SKINWALKERS
4 THE LAST KING of SCOTLAND	4 1408
5 SKINWALKERS	5 THE LAST LEGION
6 HAIRSPRAY	6 THE WAITRESS

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

OPENS
SEPT. 26



WE HAVE WITNESSED
the BEGINNING...

WE HAVE SEEN
the APOCALYPSE...

NOW WE FACE
EXTINCTION.

MILLA JOVOVICH

RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION



ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY,
SEPTEMBER 20, 2007

ABC 5 sore about 'Idol' move

From page D1

"Family Feud," Daffon retorted: "GMA 7 was in a position to make a better offer. It's a giant. We're just Jack trying to climb the beanstalk."

She recounted that ABC 5 had been "the first to produce local versions of foreign formats"—including Fremen-

the game shows "Family Feud" and "Price is Right" and King World's "Wheel of Fortune" in 2001.

Daffon added: "The Philippines has become a lucrative market for format franchising since Pearson/Fremantle targeted Asia for its expansive drive in the 1990s and early 2000."

ABC 5 must be doing something right, she said, "because GMA 7, which until recently said no to franchises, turned around and went after 'Idol.'"

Daffon pointed out that, in a 2006 interview with the *INQUIRER*, Wilma Galvante, GMA 7 senior vice president for entertainment TV, claimed that the network didn't need "to buy [a foreign franchise and] to get other people's ideas."

Must-have show

Sought for comment, Galvante said: "I'm not going back on my word. What I meant then was copying foreign franchises 100 percent, without making adjustments to entertain local viewers."

Daffon asserted: "ABC 5 will always have the distinction of ... having mounted a highly successful, world-class RP 'Idol' which was roundly praised even by Fremantle. For covetous local TV, it became the must-have show."

Daffon expressed sadness over the rumor that GMA 7 would consider its second season as the first RP "Idol."

"Too bad for [season one champ] Mau, who has huge talent."

New battlefield

Daffon observed: "There's a new battlefield for the two giants: Franchises. ABS-CBN has *Endemol* and GMA has Fremantle."

A Kapuso insider earlier said that ABS-CBN is positioning its *Endemol* talent search "Pinoy Dream Academy" to go on a head-on collision with GMA 7's RP "Idol" in February 2008.

ONE UNSTOPPABLE FORCE. ONE IMMOVABLE OBJECT. ONE INCONCEIVABLE EVENT.

JET LI & JASON STATHAM

NO LAW.
NO RULES.
NO LIMITS.
NO RETREAT.
NO SURRENDER.

NOW SHOWING

ROGUE ASSASSIN

exclusive screening at Robinsons Movieworld GALLERIA

Starring: Harry Laurel, Justin de Leon, Jennifer Lee, Sheree and Allan Paule

According to folklore, the fairy of the lighthouse shows herself every full moon to the man her heart desires. When this man succumbs to the fairy's charms and makes love to her, he will never long for any other woman. Woven into this legend is the story of Mateo (Harry Laurel), a lighthouse caretaker. Jerome (Justin de Leon), a gay man from the city finds himself deeply attracted to this simple yet seductive man upon meeting him. Soon, Mateo finds himself entering a subtle homoerotic journey with his newfound friend, while Suzet (Jennifer Lee), his girlfriend, continues to struggle for his love and attention. Will Mateo bravely cross the thin line between being straight and being gay in the midst of his conservative rural community?

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB Rating: R18

Catch the lead actors of the movie, Harry Laurel and Justin de Leon and director Jay Alarcon on its opening day. September 19 (Wednesday) at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria • 6:30PM

AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS G83 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations. Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 HOST	2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
GLORIETTA 4	1 BRATZ	2 ROGUE ASSASIN	3 SHOOT THEM UP	4 JOSHUA
GREENBELT 1	1 SHOOT THEM UP	2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	4 THE BRAVE ONE
GREENBELT 3	1 SHOOT THEM UP	2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	3 JOSHUA	4 ROGUE ASSASIN
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	2 SHOOT THEM UP	3 BRATZ	4 THE BRAVE ONE
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	2 NANCY DREW	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 THE LAST LEGION
MARKET! MARKET!	1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	2 HOST	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 BRATZ
TRINOMA	1 ROGUE ASSASIN	2 HOST	3 BRATZ	4 SHOOT THEM UP
	5 UNDERDOG	6 THE BRAVE ONE	7 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	

AT THE MALLS

GLORIETTA	CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS: Glorietta - 752 7272 Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54	AYALA
GLORIETTA	Martin Nievera's Album Launch September 19, 2007; 6 PM at the Activity Center	
GREENBELT	Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peek Presents: Collection of Kate Torralba September 12 to 23, 2007 at Greenbelt 3 Lobby	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Philippine Robotics September 17 to 19, 2007 at the Activity Center	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 PM; OnStage (Cinema 1)	
MARKET! MARKET!	Health & Beauty Outlet Sale September 17 to 20, 2007 at the Activity Center	
ONSTAGE	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710	
AYALA MUSEUM	Pioneers of Philippine Art: Transnationalism in the Late 19th - 20th century June 15, 2007 to January 6, 2008 at the 3rd Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org	
Tri Noma	Samsung Exhibit An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones September 14 to 16; 10am to 9 pm; Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2	

Meet & Greet the stars of

Apat Dapat DAPAT APAT

FRIENDS 4 LYF AND DEATH

Rafa Mae Quinto
Eugene Domingo Pokwang Candy Pangilinan
and other surprise guest celebrities!

SEPTEMBER 21, 2007 • FRIDAY
5:00 pm • Glorietta Activity Center

Reserved seats for the first 200 moviegoers who will present any movie tickets purchased in any Ayala Malls Cinemas.

Movie opens October 10, 2007 at Ayala Malls Cinemas

Catch American Idol finalist Elliott Yamin in a live concert at the Ayala Malls!

TriNoma Activity Center September 21 7:00pm

Glorietta Activity Center September 22 7:00pm

Market! Market! Activity Center September 23 6:00pm

Ayala Center Cebu On Stage September 26 6:00pm

Alabang Town Center Activity Center September 28 6:30pm

ABC MLX Globe Panasonic

FEEDBACK

Lea's blog
FROM ARLAN (the-
filipino-researcher@ya-
hoo.com), Angeles
City, Pampanga:
Thanks to Dolly
Anne Carvajal for
reprinting Lea Salonga's
blog in her column.
Indeed, Pinoy show biz
fans must recognize the
psychological [burden] being
inflicted upon them by
show biz folks.

SHANGHAI CINEPLEX

- 1** I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
MTRCB R-13 12:00, 2:30
5:00, 7:30, 10:00
- 2** BRATZ
SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING
1:50, 4:15, 6:40, 9:05
- 3** UNDERDOG
MTRCB OF 1:20, 3:30
THE BRAVE ONE
MTRCB R 13 5:30, 8:00
- 4** SHOOT 'EM UP
SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40,
10:00pm

PREMIERE THEATRE ROGUE ASSASSIN (R-13)
2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

The Most Awaited Fight is On!
The Will to Win "PACQUIAO vs BARRERA"
Super Featherweight Championship
on **OCTOBER 7, 2007 (SUNDAY) - 8:00 AM (MANILA TIME)**
Live Via Satellite from
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
Cinema Gates Open at 7:00 AM - Ticket Price - P 600.00

8th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 833-7851, loc. 171/170 or 833-2227
for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING **PG-13** Children below thirteen (13) years of age shall be allowed only if accompanied by parent or adult

BREAKING BOX OFFICE RECORDS IN KOREA, US AND CHINA.
ONE OF THE BEST REVIEWED FILMS IN 2007.



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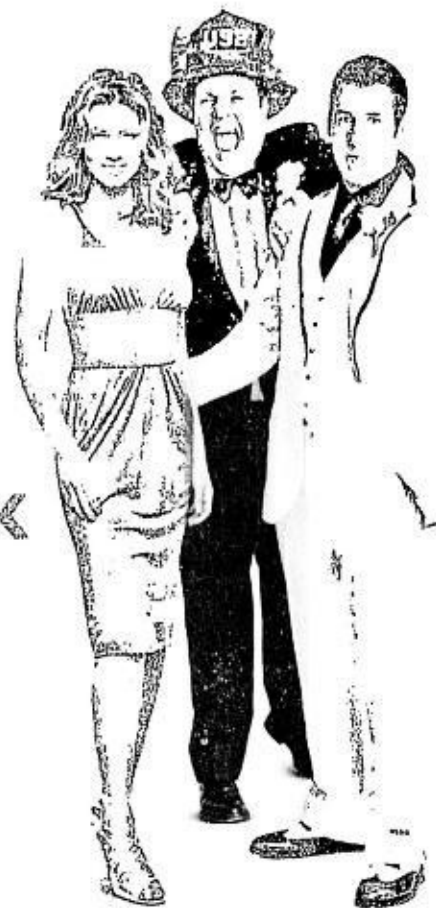
ENGLISH
VERSION



AMSANDLER
"NAMES"

Lord's
best friend

I NOW PRONO
YOU
**CHUCK
AND
LARRY**



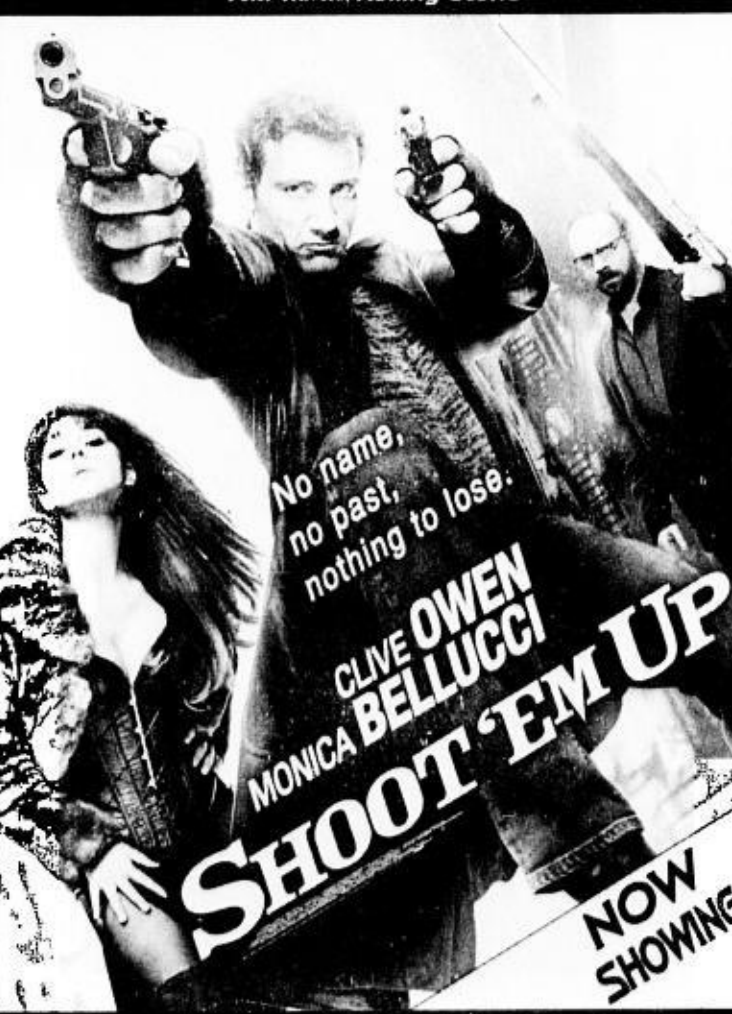
NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING **R-13** STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP

"Some of this stuff is so out there
**YOU'LL HAVE TO SEE IT
TO BELIEVE IT!**"
~Pete Hammond, MAXIM

"This **NEW BREED** of action thriller
HITS THE BULL'S EYE."
~Stephen Rebell, PLAYBOY

"This is a **WET DREAM** for ACTION JUNKIES."
~Peter Travers, Rolling Stone



MMTA

METRO MANILA
THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

1	2	3
CHUCK & LARRY	BRATZ	SHOOT THEM UP
SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

1	2
SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN
CHUCK & LARRY	CHUCK & LARRY

1	2	3
CHUCK & LARRY	BRATZ	SHOOT THEM UP
SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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CHUCK & LARRY	BRATZ	SHOOT THEM UP
SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

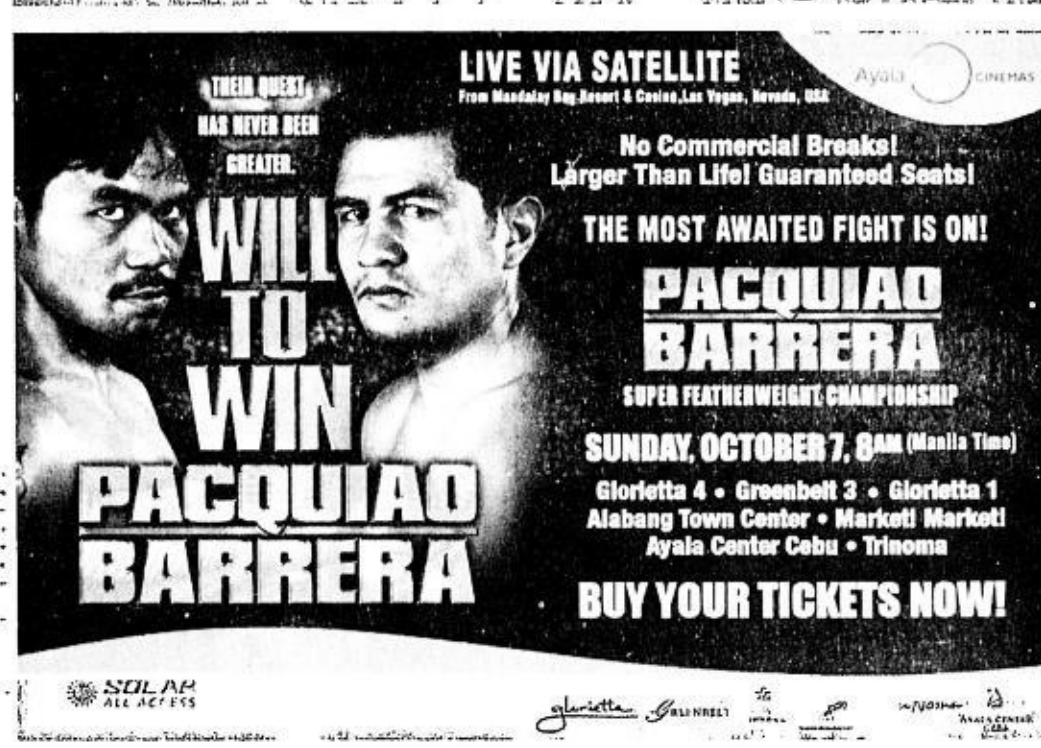
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SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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CHUCK & LARRY	BRATZ	SHOOT THEM UP
SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

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CHUCK & LARRY	BRATZ	SHOOT THEM UP
SHOOT THEM UP	ROGUE ASSASSIN	CHUCK & LARRY

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT
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aranelacenter.net

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gatewaymall.com.ph

GateWay Cineplex*10
3 cinema gateways in 10 cities

ONLY CINEMAS IN THE COUNTRY

I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY 12:10/2:35/5:00/7:25/9:50	ROGUE ASSASSIN 2:10/2:30/4:50/7:10/9:30	SHOOT EM UP 1:40/4:20/7:00/9:50
HOST 12:55/3:45/6:35/9:25	UNDERDOG 2:05/4:30/6:55/9:20	I KNOW WHO KILLED ME 1:55/4:30/7:05/9:40
BRATZ 12:30/2:45/5:00/7:15/9:30	THE BRAVE ONE 1:20/4:10/7:00/9:50	SHOOT EM UP 12:40/3:40/6:20/9:00

ARANETA COLISEUM
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FALL OUT BOY CONCERT
Friends or Enemies World Tour
September 20 & 21, Thursday & Friday 8 pm

UAAP FINAL FOUR
September 23, Sunday

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Text us your feedback:
inquirer ent name/age/city/message
to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

No comparison between Angel and KC—Becky Aguila

ANGEL Locsin's feisty manager Becky Aguila sent me this text message: "There should be no comparison between Angel Locsin and KC Concepcion. ABS got Angel for her being simple and *makatao*. Angel had humble beginnings and had to struggle her way up. KC was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. Angel admires KC. It's unfair to compare them."

C'est vrai! There's room for everybody at the top especially for Angel and KC, who each deserves her success.

Making up

Dingdong Dantes and Karylle made up for lost time by going out on a date as soon as she came back from her US holiday.

"Dong hasn't had a free day for a long time and I was away for two weeks," K said. "We had dinner at Chef Laudico's at the Fort and watched a jazz band at

Mandarin. It was sweet because we haven't had a real date in a long while."

She brought him many *pasalubong*: shirts, hats, authentic chili for his fave chili soup and dark chocolates.

Dong's love team with Marian Rivera doesn't get in the way of his relationship with K, just as Dong's love for K doesn't come between his love for his work in "Marimar" as Marian's leading man.

Guess list

•Guess who this chanteuse is. During a lull in a talk show's taping, she approached the director who was quietly reading a book in one corner. When she found out that it wasn't a Christian book, she was enraged and gave the director a lecture on the Born-Again faith. She even told him she'd send him a Bible so he could read that instead.

The director was stunned! When prayer time came, the singer refused to join the group. Nothing wrong with shar-

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal



ing our beliefs ... but we shouldn't impose it on others. The singer ought to know that not everybody sings the same tune.

•Guess who this sexy star is. She has split up with her longtime live-in partner (a dancer). The reason for their breakup was her jealousy attacks every time he spent time with his kid and ex. Even if they have parted ways, they still stay under one roof. Same house, but different homes for their hearts.

Paris experience

A different side of KC Concepcion will

be seen as she shares her life in the City of Light in ABS-CBN's special, "KC from Paris to Pinas" on Sept. 23 at 10:30 p.m.

Things to watch out for include glimpses of KC's daily activities, her bonding with newfound friends and keeping her own flat. I'm looking forward to watching it so I can recapture my own student days in Paris.

In spite of her Parisian experience, KC remains a Pinay at heart. No place can ever be called home for her without her Mega mom around.

C'est la vie en rose a la KC!

Falling for Fall Out Boy

Whatever genre they may fall under, it's certainly no surprise that Fall Out Boy has continued its meteoric ascent to music superstardom since releasing "From Under the Cork Tree" in 2005.

It is still doing so with "Infinity On High." The group just won the Teen Choice 2007 Awards for Choice Rock

Group, with its album is now on its 27th week on the Billboard 200 album chart.

Tomorrow's show is sold out, but you can probably catch them tonight. Call 911-5555.

September blowout

On its 12th magical year, Enchanted Kingdom pays tribute to our beloved elders with the Grand September Blowout. The Bloomfields will play retro music on Sept. 22 and 29, as will The Tiongo Brothers on Oct. 6.

On Sept. 23 and 30, it's a date with Frank Sinatra of the Philippines Willy Bayona, Connie Francis of the Philippines Joy Barretto and the Man with a Thousand Voices, Arthur Edano.

Gigs start at 5 p.m. Dolphy will be the special guest on Sept. 22. Call 830-2111 to 16. Cheers to the golden years!

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.



CYNTHIA Alexander
JMGUAD
PUNZALAN

SHOW TIME

Packed sked tonight

THE CHICAGO-based, pop-punk band Fall Out Boy (FOB) plays tonight and tomorrow at the Araneta Coliseum. Tickets for tonight's show are still on sale, while those for tomorrow are sold out.

The band is one of the hottest contemporary acts worldwide, buoyed by the chart-topping success of its albums, including the latest, "Infinity on High" (MCA).

FOB won as Best Group in the 2007 MTV Video Awards. Call 911-5555.

Young Artists Series

The University of Asia and the Pacific (UAP) Kultura Young Artists Series winds up with live performances from Up Dharma Down and Drip tomorrow at the Li Seng Giap Auditorium, 2/F Apec Communications Bldg., UAP campus, Pasig. Admission is free.

Friday Film Bar

The UP Film Institute's Friday Film Bar (FFB) presents a triple treat tomorrow, 6 p.m. with a performance from singer-songwriter Cynthia Alexander, a film showing of John Torres' "Todo

Todo Teros" (award winner at the 2006 Vancouver International Film Festival), and free-flowing coffee and native iced tea.

FFB is held at the UP Film Institute's Ishmael Bernal Gallery. Tickets are at P80.

For inquiries, call 926-2722/0916-4081550 or log on to FridayFilmBar@gmail.com.

Tonight

Binky Lampano; The Jerks at RJTV Bar, 28 Jupiter St. Bel-Air, Makati Call 899-1658

Carding Cruz Jr.; The Groove at Merk's Bar & Bistro, Greenbelt 3, Makati

Serious Improv Theater at Mag:Net Katipunan, Quezon City

Up Dharma Down, Radioactive Sago Project, Spaceflowers and Chicosci at Mag:Net High Street, The Fort

DJ Edwin Edralin; The Jude Lee Project Band at O Lounge, Alchemy, Julia Vargas Ave. Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 706-1305

The New Minstrels & Friends at Funnside, Timog near corner T. Morato Ave. Quezon City

Simple plot, compelling results

By Oliver M. Pulumbait
Contributor

REWARDING and cathartic, the Neil Jordan-directed crime drama "The Brave One" is about a mild-mannered radio host, Erica Bain (Jodie Foster), who transforms radically after being mugged at a New York park. It unfolds typically for a revenge tale, but because Jordan is a master storyteller, it is haunting and character-driven.

Sleek, contrasting photography and symmetrical visual composition enhance the story written by Roderick and Bruce Taylor, and help conjure a more vivid world where Erica the victim evolves into a mystery vigilante. It's a simple plot; but as it is sharply edited and aptly paced, the results are compelling, some cheesy scenes aside.

Erica, a steady radio presence that magnetically paints her New York allegories with colorful metaphors, abruptly loses her fiancé (Naveen Andrews), and is left for dead in a brutal attack. Waking from a long coma, Erica tries to make sense of



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TERRENCE Howard and Jodie Foster in "The Brave One."

the incident in vain, while her tormentors—and her lover's murderers—roam free. It's a life-sapping, arduous process for her; she becomes jumpy and depressed, but after giving due process a chance, she decides that she can no longer just wait and live in fear.

Taking matters into her hands, she quietly hunts down the predators.

As usual, Foster is a gem. Whether as the cheerful Erica or

the steely, gun-toting exterminator, she transmits genuineness. The grieving woman figure just happens to be stronger and more credible because the actress gets to do much with her. Erica's deejay-commentator voice also emits wisdom, especially after her tragic ordeal.

Disturbing

"The Brave One" does get disturbing, apart from the part where Foster's and Andrews'

characters get terrorized. There's a clever, if wince-inducing, interspersing of scenes, a seamless binding of tender lovemaking flashbacks between the happy lovers, and Erica's broken body being revived and repaired on the emergency room table. There's a sad but beautiful Sarah McLachlan song that accessorizes that creative set of imagery as well. Again, the use of contrasting light and shadow, aside from the skillful use of color palettes, works in tandem with those elements.

The character's crime-fighting spree isn't far-fetched; given the same circumstances, certain people might actually take the same path. Like "Kill Bill" and even "The Hills Have Eyes," where survivors of violence get back at their abusers, revenge is sweet as well when "The Brave One" reaches that expected climax.

There's catharsis, and some specific moments may be funny because of in-your-face methods of retribution. But it inspires reflection on the real meaning of justice.

Emmy 'Sopranos' send-off a ratings dud

LOS ANGELES—The 59th annual Primetime Emmys and its farewell salute to "The Sopranos" was a ratings dud, averaging just over 13 million viewers, the second-lowest number on record for the awards, Nielsen Media Research reported on Monday.

The Fox network's live, three-hour broadcast of TV's highest honors on Sunday night averaged nearly 19 percent fewer viewers than

those tuned in last year, 16.1 million, when NBC carried the show and the Fox espionage thriller "24" was a big winner.

The smallest Emmy audience on record was for the 1990 telecast, also carried by Fox, averaging 12.3 million viewers. The 2004 show on ABC ranks third-lowest, with 13.8 million.

Sunday's Emmy show also posted record low ratings for viewers aged 18 to 49, the audi-

ence demographic most prized by advertisers in prime time. "These are not stellar numbers," a Fox spokesman said.

One apparent factor was formidable competition from NBC's new weekly "Sunday Night Football" broadcast, which aired opposite the Emmys in the eastern and central US time zones that account for 75 percent of the TV audience.

Reuters

New films score with target audiences

NEW MOVIES generally do better at the tills when they're cannily aimed at specific viewing sectors. For instance, "The Bourne Ultimatum" is clearly for action and espionage film buffs, with particular focus on followers of the increasingly popular Jason Bourne movie franchise.

This time around, Bourne (Matt Damon) is still being pursued by CIA operatives who want to permanently silence him, so he won't sic the authorities on them for executing even Americans in the compromised name of national security.

Bourne is hell-bent on finally unearthing his true identity before he gave everything up to defend his country, however, flawed some of his superiors had turned out to be.

Unexpectedly sucked into this whirlpool of covert and overt violence is another secret operative played by Julia Stiles, who apparently was involved with Bourne before he lost track of his past. It is hinted that, if another Bourne sequel is forthcoming, she will resurface for a more detailed involvement with the tormented antihero.

To add more twists and turns to the already complex proceedings, Bourne's superiors are characterized as either antagonistic or supportive. As a result, they engage in their own fierce infighting, while appearing to work for the same noble objectives. All of these potentially loose and even contradictory ends are efficiently tied together by the production, so that it moves dynamically to its slam-bang finale.

True, a number of Bourne's feats are veritable flights of action-thriller fancy, but the movie balances them off with enough ar-

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

resting and convincing details in other sequences to make it a realistic, compelling treat for espionage and action buffs.

Another new film that scores solidly with its intended audience is the "teen noir" production "Nancy Drew," starring Julia Roberts' niece, Emma, as comely sleuth.

Aimed at female adolescents and teens, the film is fanciful in the facile way that it enables its young heroine to confound much older and bigger villains. Teens, please don't try this at home, neighborhood or school!

Plus side

On the plus side, the movie gives young female viewers a good, if improbably self-sufficient, role model in Nancy Drew's resourceful character. She's so sure of herself that she twists even her doting dad around her little finger—but he doesn't resent it, knowing that her heart is in the right place.

Insecure teens will get an empathetic surge out of watching Nancy as she shows nasty, old villains who's boss. The biggest case she solves involves the death of a film star, whose daughter is finally reunited with the father she's never known.

She also belatedly inherits her late moth-

er's vast estate, despite the determined attempts of the late star's mysterious killer to silence the movie's resident teen sleuth. This Nancy is no pansy, that's for sure!

Emma Roberts does well in her first solo starring role, but it's a lightweight acting assignment for her, so we can't say how far she'll go as a screen thespian. But let's not speed the process up. She should be given time to enjoy her success, which could lead to a sequel—or even a series of them.

'Rogue Assassin'

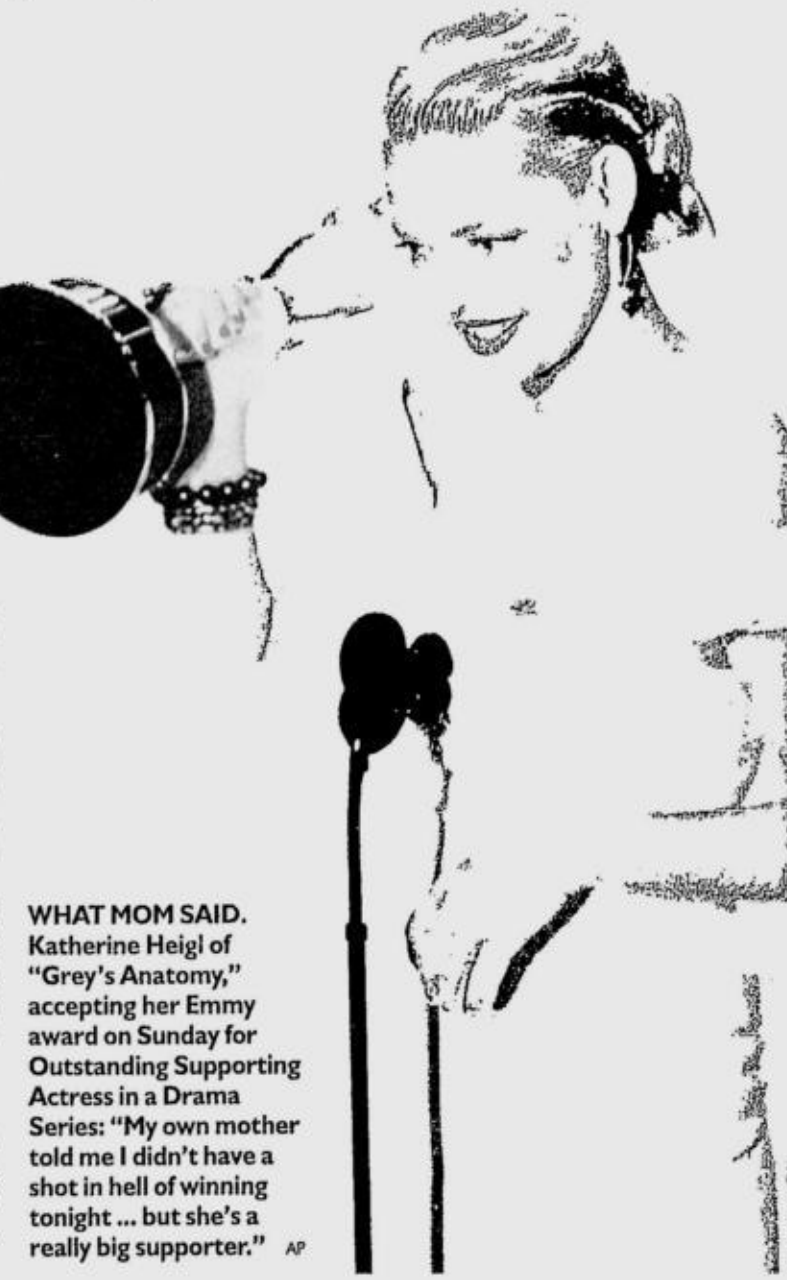
In 2001, Jet Li and Jason Statham co-starred in the hit actioner, "The One." Six years later, they appear together again in the martial arts thriller, "Rogue Assassin."

After his partner is murdered by Li's character, Statham vows to avenge his friend's death. But the assassin is impossible to find—until three years later, when he resurfaces to ignite a bloody turf war between a Chinese mob leader and a Yakuza boss.

But Statham's thirst for vengeance clouds his professional judgment, and the violence escalates. When he comes face to face with his hated foe, another twist presents itself: Statham discovers that nothing about Li and his plan is what it seemed to be.

'Ang Pagong at ang Matsing'

Gantimpala Theater's "Ang Pagong at ang Matsing" musical extravaganza goes on tour Sept. 19-21 (Pampanga), Oct. 12 (Tarlac), Oct. 24-26 and Dec. 2 (Manila). Call 899-5745.



WHAT MOM SAID. Katherine Heigl of "Grey's Anatomy," accepting her Emmy award on Sunday for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series: "My own mother told me I didn't have a shot in hell of winning tonight ... but she's a really big supporter." AP